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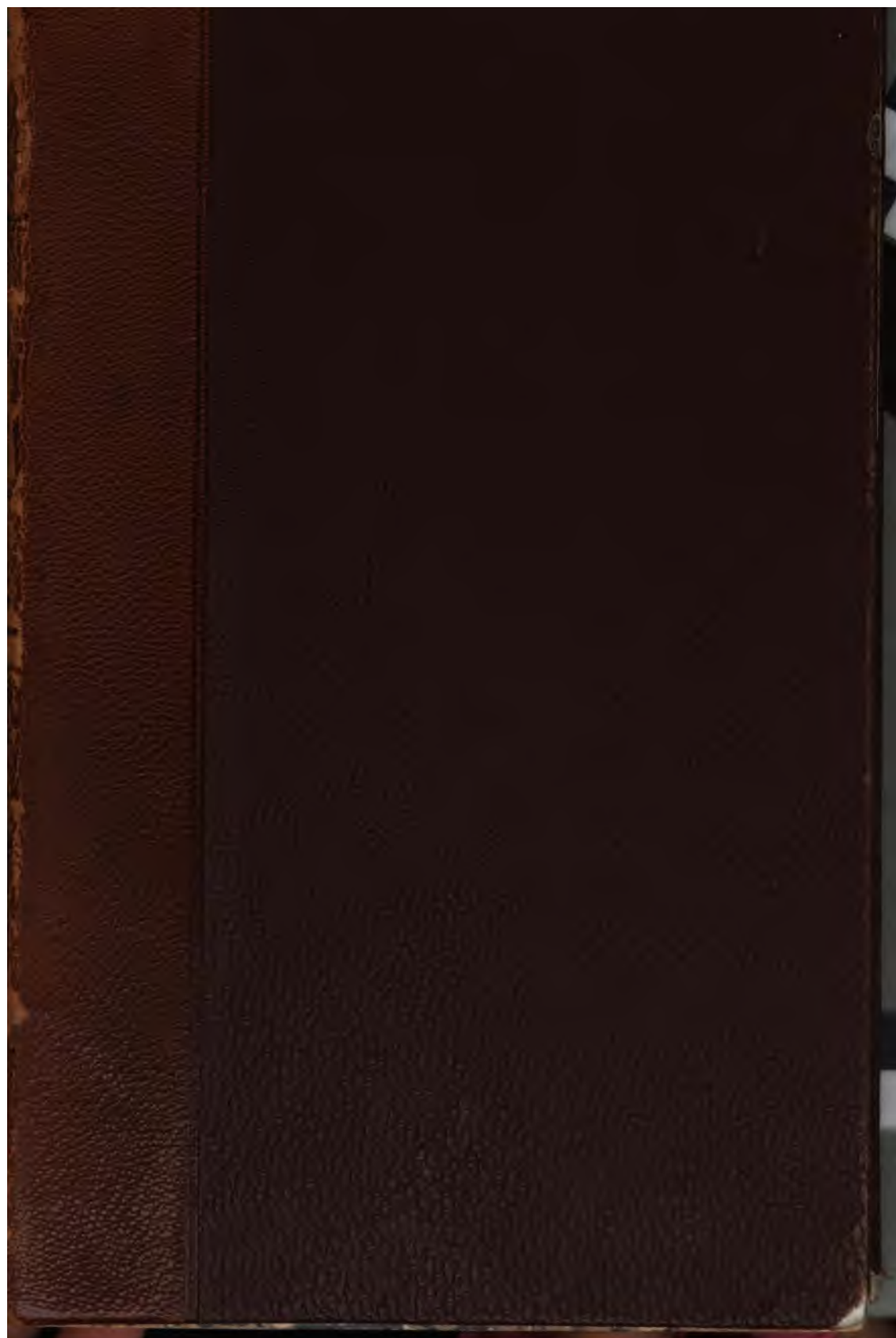
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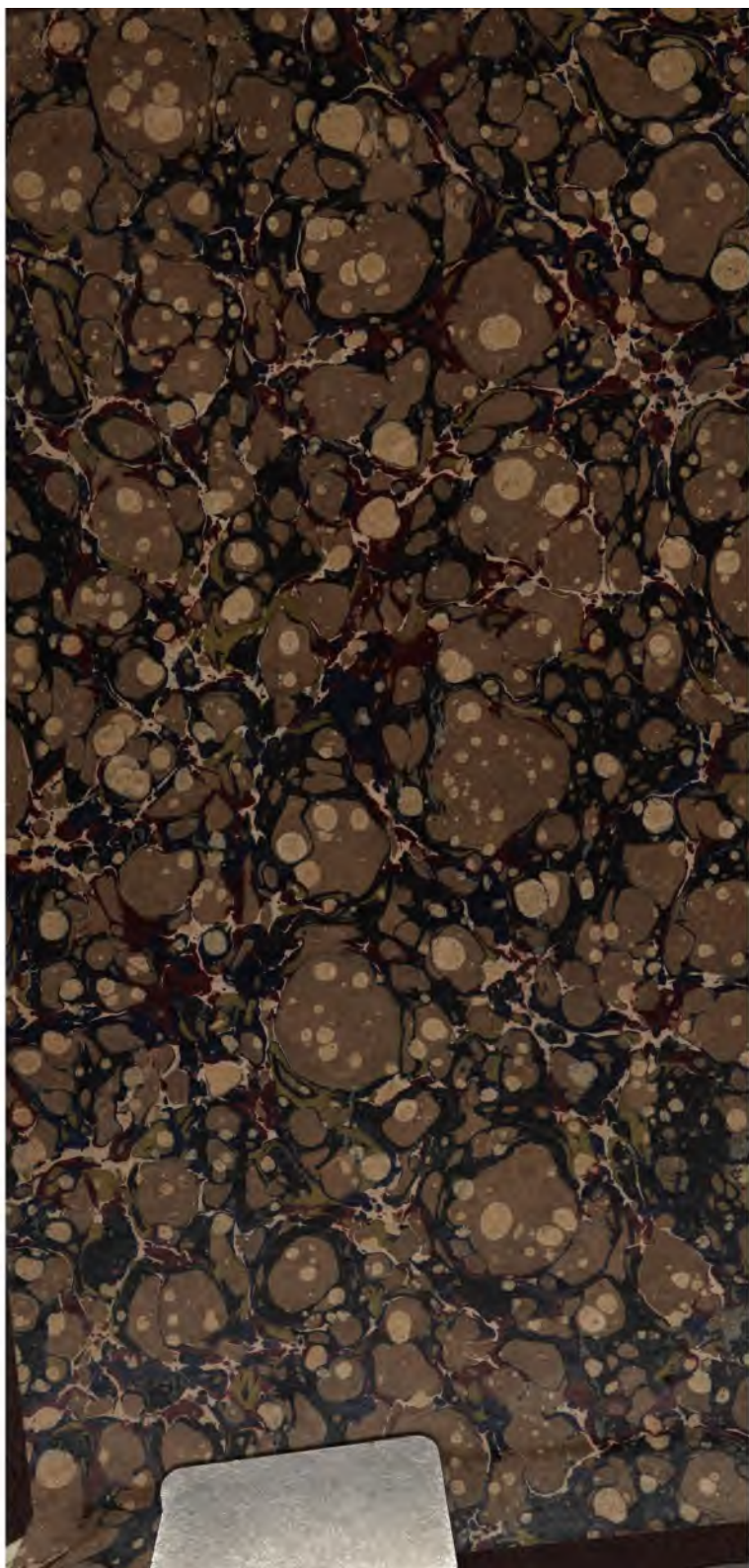
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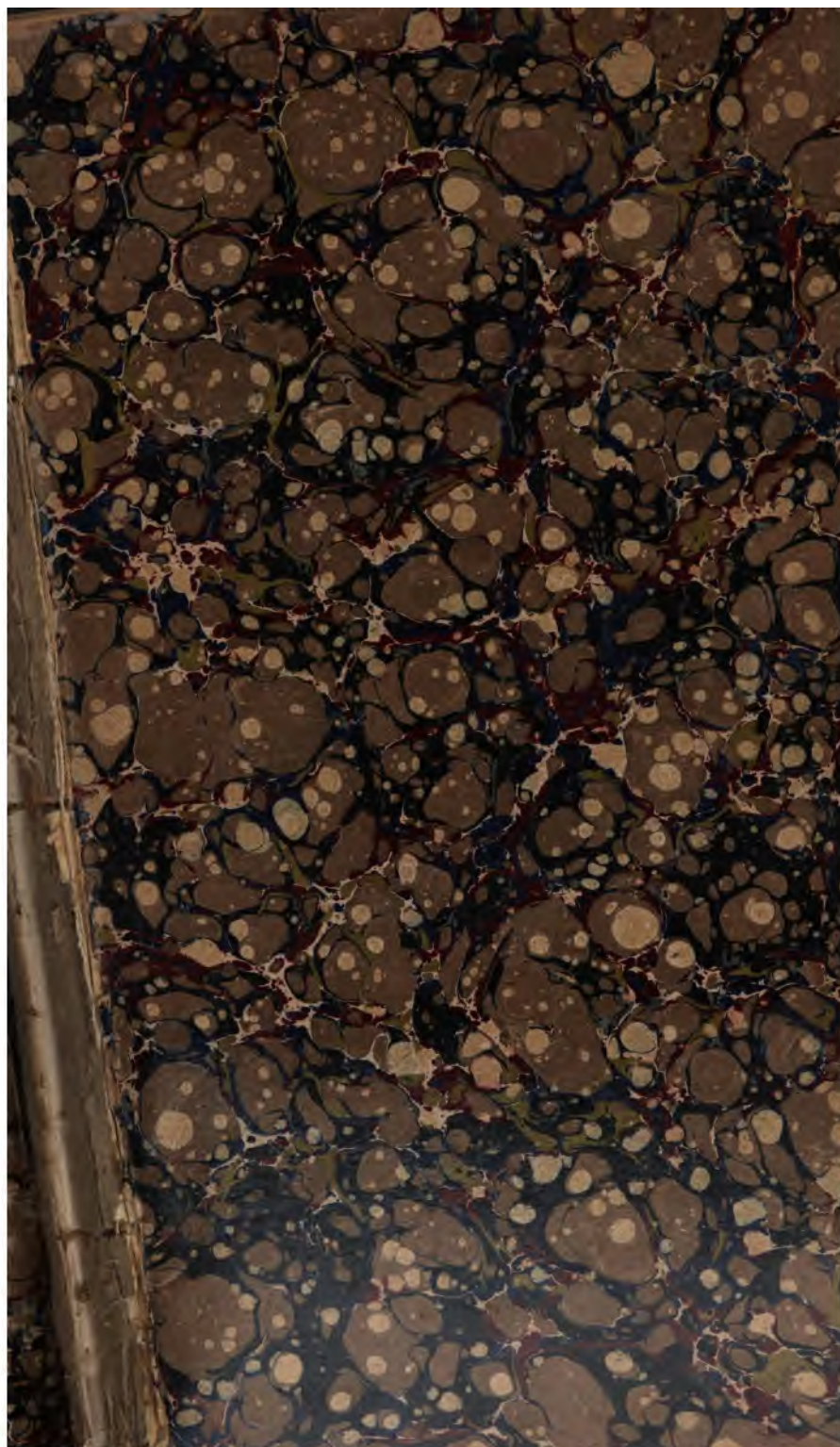
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Chaucer's Translation  
of  
Boethius's "De Consolatione  
Philosophiæ."

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Chaucer's Translation  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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WHEN master hands like those of Gibbon and Hallam have sketched the life of *Boethius*, it is well that no meaner man should attempt to mar their pictures. They drew, perhaps, the most touching scene in Middle-age literary history,—the just man in prison, awaiting death, consoled by the Philosophy that had been his light in life, and handing down to posterity for their comfort and strength the presence of her whose silver rays had been his guide as well under the stars of Fortune as the mirk of Fate. With Milton in his dark days, Boece in prison could say,—

‘I argue not  
Against Heaven’s hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope ; but still bear up and steer  
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask ?  
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied  
In liberty’s defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.’

For, indeed, the echoes of Boethius, Boethius, rang out loud from every corner of European Literature. An Alfred awoke them in England, a Chaucer, a Caxton would not let them die ; an Elizabeth revived them among the glorious music of her reign.<sup>1</sup> To us, though far off, they come with a sweet sound. ‘The angelic’ Thomas Aquinas commented on him, and many others followed the saint’s steps. Dante read him, though, strange to say, he speaks of the

<sup>1</sup> Other translations are by John Walton of Osney, in verse, in 1410 (Reg. MS. 18, A 13), first printed at Tavistock in 1525, and to be edited some time or other for the E. E. T. S. An anonymous prose version in the Bodleian. George Colville, alias Coldewel, 1556 ; J. T. 1609 ; H. Conningesbye, 1664 ; Lord Preston, 1695, 1712 ; W. Causton, 1730 ; Redpath, 1785 ; R. Duncan, 1789 ; anon. 1792 (Lowndes).

Consolation as 'a book not known by many.'<sup>1</sup> Belgium had her translations—both Flemish<sup>2</sup> and French<sup>3</sup>; Germany hers,<sup>4</sup> France hers,<sup>5</sup> Italy hers.<sup>6</sup> The Latin editors are too numerous to be catalogued here, and manuscripts abound in all our great libraries.

No philosopher was so bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of Middle-age writers as Boethius. Take up what writer you will, and you find not only the sentiments, but the very words of the distinguished old Roman. And surely we who read him in Chaucer's tongue, will not refuse to say that his full-circling meed of glory was other than deserved. Nor can we marvel that at the end of our great poet's life, he was glad that he had swelled the chorus of Boethius' praise; and 'of the translacioun of Boece de Consolacioun,' thanked 'oure Lord Ihesu Crist and his moder, and alle the seintes in heuen.'

The impression made by Boethius on Chaucer was evidently very deep. Not only did he translate him directly, as in the present work, but he read his beloved original over and over again, as witness the following list, incomplete of course, of passages from Chaucer's poems translated more or less literally from the *De Consolatione*:

I. LOVE.

Wost thou nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,  
That who schal yeve a lover eny lawe,  
Love is a grettere lawe, by my pan,  
Then may be yeve to (of) eny erthly man?

(*Knights Tale, Aldine Series*, vol. ii. p. 36, 37.)

But what is he þat may zeue a lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter  
lawe and a strengere to hym self þan any lawe þat men may zeuen.

(*Chaucer's Prose Translation*, p. 108.)

*Quis legem det amantibus?*

*Major lex amor est sibi.*—(Boeth., lib. iii. met. 12.)

<sup>1</sup> Dante, in his *Convito*, says, "Misimi a legger quello *non conosciuto da molti* libro di Boezio, nel quale captivo e discacciato consolato s'avea."

<sup>2</sup> Printed at Ghent, 1485.

<sup>3</sup> By Reynier de Seinct Trudon, printed at Bruges, 1477.

<sup>4</sup> An old version of the 11th cent., printed by Graff, and a modern one printed at Nuremberg, 1473.

<sup>5</sup> By Jean de Méung, printed at Paris, 1494.

<sup>6</sup> By Varchi, printed at Florence, 1551; Parma, 1738.

## II. A DRUNKEN MAN.

A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,  
But he not<sup>1</sup> which the righte wey is thider.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 39.)

*Ryzt as a dronke man not nat<sup>2</sup> by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house.*—(Chaucer's Trans., p. 67.)

*Sed velut ebrius, domum quo tramite revertatur, ignorat.*

(Boeth., lib. iii. pr. 2.)

## III. THE CHAIN OF LOVE.

The firste moevere of the cause above,  
~~Whan he first made the fayre cheyne of love,~~  
~~Gret was the effect, and heigh was his entente;~~  
~~Wel wot he why, and what therof he mente;~~  
*For with that faire cheyne of love he bond*  
*The fyr, the watir, the eyr, and eek the lond*  
*In certeyn boundes, that they may not flee.*

(*Knights Tale*, p. 92.)

That þe world with stable feith / varieth acordable chaungynges // þat the contraryos qualite of elementz holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / þat phebus the sonne with his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the rosene day / þat the mone hath commaundement ouer the nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the eue sterre hat[h] browt // þat þe se gredy to flouen constreyneth with a certeyn ende hise floodes / so þat it is nat l[e]ueful to strechche hise brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // þat is to seyn to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges is bownden with looue / þat gouerneth erthe and see / and [he] hath also commaundementz to the heuenes / and yif this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges þat now louen hem to-gederes / wolden maken a batayle contynuely and stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde / the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre moeuynges // this looue halt to-gideres poeples / ioyned with an hooly bond / and knytteth sacrement of maryages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to trewe felawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke loue þat gouerneth heuene gouerned yowre corages /—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, bk. ii. met. 8.)

Quod mundus stabili fide  
Concordes variat vices,  
Quod pugnantia semina  
Fœdus perpetuum tenent,  
Quod Phœbus roseum diem  
Curru provehit aureo,  
Ut quas duxerit Hesperus

<sup>1</sup> The Harl. MS. reads *not nat*, to the confusion of the metre.

<sup>2</sup> = ne wot nat = knows not.



Phœbe noctibus imperet,  
 Ut fluctus avidum mare  
 Certo fine coerceat,  
 Ne terris liceat vagis  
 Latos tundere terminos;  
*Hanc rerum seriem ligat,*  
*Terras ac pelagus regens,*  
*Et cælo imperitans amor.*  
 Hic si fræna remiserit,  
 Quicquid nunc amat invicem,  
 Bellum continuo geret:  
 Et quam nunc socia fide  
 Pulcris motibus incitant,  
 Certent solvere machinam.  
 Hic sancto populos quoque  
 Junctos fœdere continet,  
 Hic et conjugii sacrum  
 Castis nectit amoribus,  
 Hic fidis etiam sua  
 Dictat jura sodalibus.  
 O felix hominum genus,  
 Si vestros animos amor,  
 Quo cælum regitur, regat.—(*Boeth.*, lib. ii. met. 8.)

Love, that of erth and se hath governaunee!  
 Love, that his hestes hath in hevene hye!  
 Love, that with an holsom alliaunce  
 Halt peples joyned, as hym liste hem gye!  
 Love, that knetteth law and compaignye,  
 And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle!  
 (*Troilus & Cryseyde*, st. 243, vol. iv. p. 296.)

That, that the world with faith, which that is stable  
 Dyverseth so, his stoundes concordynge;—  
 That elementz, that ben so discordable,  
 Holden a bond, perpetually durynge;—  
 That Phebus mot his rosy carte forth brynge,  
 And that the mone hath lordschip overe the nyghte;—  
Al this doth Love, ay heryed be his myght!

That, that the se, that gredy is to flowen,  
 Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so  
 Hise flodes, that so fierly they ne growen  
 To drenchen erth and alle for everemo;  
 And if that Love aught letȝ his brydel go,  
 Al that now loveth awonder sholde lepe,  
 And lost were al that Love halt now to kepe.  
 (*Ibid.* st. 244, 245.)

IV. MUTABILITY DIRECTED AND LIMITED BY AN IMMUTABLE AND  
DIVINE INTELLIGENCE.

That same prynce and moevere eek, quod he,  
 Hath stabled, in this wrecched world adoun,  
Certeyn dayes and duracioun  
 To alle that er engendrid in this place,  
 Over the whiche day they may nat pace,  
 Al mowe they yit wel here dayes abregge;

Than may men wel by this ordre discerne  
 That thilke moevere stabul is and eterne.

And therfore of his wyse purveaunce  
 He hath so wel biset his ordenaunce,  
 That spices of thinges and progressiouns  
 Schullen endure by successiouns  
 And nat eterne be, withoute any lye.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92, 93.)

þe engendrynge of alle þinges quod she and alle þe progressiouns of muuable nature. and alle þat moeuþ in any manere takiþ hys causes. hys ordre. and hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe deuyne pouzt [and thilke deuyne thowht] þat is yset and put in þe toure. þat is to seyne in þe heyzt of þe simplicite of god. stablisþ many manere gyses to þinges þat ben to don.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, bk. iv. pr. 6, p. 134.)

V. THE PART IS DERIVED FROM THE WHOLE, THE IMPERFECT  
FROM THE PERFECT.

Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,  
 That every partye dyryveth from his hool.  
 For nature hath nat take his bygynnyng  
 Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,  
 But of a thing that parfyte is and stable,  
 Descendyng so, til it be corumpable.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92.)

For al þing þat is cleped inperfit . is proued inperfit by þe amenusynges of perfeccioun . or of þing þat is perfit . and her-of comeþ it . þat in euery þing general . yif þat . þat men seen any þing þat is inperfit . certys in þilke general þer mot ben somme þing þat is perfit. For yif so be þat perfeccioun is don away . men may nat þinke nor seye fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped inperfit . For þe nature of þinges ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and inperfit . but it procediþ of þingus þat ben al hool . and absolut . and descendeþ so doune in-to outertest þinges and in-to þingus empty and wiþ-oute fruyt .

but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne . þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse  
þat be frele and vein and inperfit . þer may no man doute . þat þer nys  
som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and perfit.'—(bk. iii. pr. 10, p. 89.)

Omne enim quod imperfectum esse dicitur, id deminutione perfecti  
imperfectum esse perhibetur. Quo fit ut si in quolibet genere imper-  
fectum quid esse videatur, in eo perfectum quoque aliquod esse necesse  
sit. Etenim perfectione sublata, unde illud, quod imperfectum perhibe-  
tur, extiterit, ne fingi quidem potest. *Neque enim ab diminutis incon-*  
*summatisque natura rerum cepit exordium, sed ab integris absolutisque*  
*procedens in hæc extrema atque effata dilabitur.* Quod si, uti paulo ante  
monstravimus, est quædam boni fragilis imperfecta felicitas, esse aliquam  
solidam perfectamque non potest dubitari.—(*Boeth.*, lib. iii. pr. 10.)

#### VI. GENTILITY.

For gentilnesse nys but renomé  
Of thin auncestres, for her heigh bounté  
Which is a straunge thing to thy persone.

(*The Wyf of Bathes Tale*, vol. ii. p. 241.)

For if þe name of gentilesse be referred to renoun and clernesse of  
linage. þan is gentil name but a foreine þing.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 78.)

*Quæ [nobilitas], si ad claritudinem refertur, aliena est.*

(*Boethius*, lib. iii. pr. 6.)

#### VII. NERO'S CRUELTY.

No teer out of his eyen for that sighte  
Ne cam ; but sayde, a fair womman was sche.  
Gret wonder is how that he couthe or mighte  
Be domesman on hir dede beauté.

(*The Monkes Tale*. vol. iii. p. 217.)

Ne no tere ne wette his face, but he was so hard-herted þat he  
myzte ben domesman or iuge of hire dede beauté.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 55.)

Ora non tinxit lacrymis, sed esse  
Censor extincti potuit decoris.

(*Boethius*, lib. ii. met. 6.)

#### VIII. PREDESTINATION AND FREE-WILL.

In 'Troylus and Cryseyde' we find the following long passage  
taken from Boethius, book v. prose 2, 3.

Book iv. st. 134, vol. iv. p. 339.

- (1) Syn God seth every thynge, out of doutaunce,  
And hem disponeth, thorough his ordinaunce,

In hire merites sothely for to be,  
As they shul comen by predesteyné

136

- (2) For som men seyn if God seth al byforne,  
 Ne God may not deseyved ben pardé!  
 Than moot it fallen, theigh men hadde it sworne,  
 That purveyaunce hath seyn befor to be,  
 Wherfor I seye, that, from eterne, if he  
 Hathe wiste byforn our thought ek as oure dede,  
We have no fre choys, as thise clerkes rede.

137

- (3) For other thoughte, nor other dede also,  
 Myghte nevere ben, but swich as purveyaunce,  
 Which may nat ben deceyved nevere moo,  
 Hath feled byforne, withouten ignoraunce;  
 For if ther myghte ben a variaunce,  
 To wrythen out fro Goddes purveyinge,  
 Ther nere no prescience of thyng comynge;

138

- (4) But it were rather an opinyon  
 Uncertein, and no stedfast forseynge;  
 And certes that were an abusyon  
 That God shold han no parfit clere wetyng,  
 More than we men, that han douteous wenyng,  
 But swich an erroure upon God to gesse  
 Were fals, and foule, and wikked corsednesse.

139

- (5) They seyn right thus, that thyng is nat to come,  
 For that the prescience hath seyne byfore  
 That it shal come; but they seyn that therfore  
 That it shal come, therfor the purveyaunce  
 Woot it bifore, withouten ignorance.

140

- (6) And in this manere this necessité  
 Retourneth in his part contrarye agayn;  
 For nedfully byhoveth it not to be,  
 That thilke thynges fallen in certeyn  
 That ben purveyed; but nedly, as they seyne,  
 Bihoveth it that thynges, which that falle,  
 That thei in certein ben purveied alle.

## 141

- (7) I mene as though I labourede me in this,  
To enqueren which thyng cause of whiche thyng be ;
- (8) As, whether that the prescience of God is  
The certain cause of the necessité  
Of thynges that to comen ben, pardé !  
Or, if necessité of thyng comynge  
Be cause certain of the purveyinge.

## 142

- (9) But now nenforce I me nat in shewynge  
How the ordre of causes stant ; but wel woot I  
That it bihoveth that the bifallynge  
Of thynges, wiste bifor certainly,  
Be necessarie, al seme it nat therby  
That prescience put fallynge necessaire  
To thyng to come, al falle it foule or faire.

## 143

- (10) For, if ther sit a man yonde on a see, [seat]  
Than by necessité bihoveth it,  
That certes thyn opinioun soth be,  
That wenest or conjectest that he sit ;  
And, further over, now ayeinwarde yit,  
Lo right so is it on the part contrarie,  
As thus,—nowe herkene, for I wol nat tarie :—

## 144

- (11) I sey, that if the opinion of the  
Be soth for that he sit, than seye I this,  
That he moot sitten by necessité ;  
And thus necessité in either is,  
For in hym nede of sittynge is, ywis,  
And in the, nede of soth ; and thus forsoth  
Ther mot necessité ben in yow bothe.

## 145

- (12) But thow maist seyne, the man sit nat therfore,  
That thyn opinioun of his sittynge sothe is ;  
But rather, for the man sat there byfore,  
Therfor is thyn opinioun soth, ywys ;  
And I seye, though the cause of soth of this  
Cometh of his sittynge, yet necessité  
Is interchaunged both in hym and the.

146

- (13) Thus in the same wyse, out of doutaunce,  
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,  
My resonynge of Goddes purveiaunce,  
And of the thynges that to comen be; . . .

147

- (14) For although that for thyng shal come, ywys,  
Therfor it is purveyed certeynly,  
Nat that it cometh for it purveied is;  
Yet, natheles, bihoveth it nedfully,  
That thyng to come be purveied trewly;  
Or elles thynges that purveied be,  
That they bitiden by necessité.

148

- (15) And this sufficeth right ynough, certeyn,  
For to distruye oure fre choyes everydele.

(1) Quæ tamen ille ab æterno cuncta prospiciens providentiæ cernit intuitus, et suis quæque meritis prædestinata disponit. . . . (*Boethius*, lib. v. pr. 2.)

(2) Nam si cuncta prospicit Deus neque falli ullo modo potest, evenire necesse est, quod providentia futurum esse præviderit. Quare si ab æterno non facta hominum modo, sed etiam consilia voluntatesque prænoscit, nulla erit arbitrii libertas;

(3) Neque enim vel factum aliud ullum vel quælibet existere poterit voluntas, nisi quam nescia falli providentia divina præsensierit. Nam si res aliorum, quam provise sunt detorqueri valent, non jam erit futuri firma præscientia;

(4) Sed opinio potius incerta; quod de Deo nefas credere iudico.

(5) Aiunt enim non ideo quid esse eventurum quoniam id providentia futurum esse prospexerit; sed e contrario potius, quoniam quid futurum est, id divinam providentiam latere non possit.

(6) Eoque modo necessarium est hoc in contrariam relabi partem; neque enim necesse est contingere quæ providentur, sed necesse est quæ futura sunt provideri.

(7) Quasi vero quæ cuiusque rei causa sit,

(8) Præscientiæ futurorum necessitatis an futurorum necessitas providentiæ, laboretur.

(9) At nos illud demonstrare nitamur, quoquo modo sese habeat ordo causarum, necessarium esse eventum præscitarum rerum, etiam si præscientia futuris rebus eveniendi necessitatem non videatur inferre.

(10) Etenim si quispiam sedeatur, opinionem quæ eum sedere conjectat veram esse necesse est: at e converso rursus,

(11) Si de quopiam vera sit opinio quoniam sedet eum sedere necesse est. In utroque igitur necessitas inest : in hoc quidem sedendi, at vero in altero veritatis.

(12) Sed non idcirco quisque sedet, quoniam vera est opinio : sed hæc potius vera est, quoniam quempiam sedere præcessit. Ita cum causa veritatis ex altera parte procedat, inest tamen communis in utraque necessitas.

(13) Similia de providentia futurisque rebus ratiocinari patet.

(14) Nam etiam si idcirco, quoniam futura sunt, providentur : non vero ideo, quoniam providentur, eveniunt : nihilo minus tamen a Deo vel ventura provideri, vel provisa evenire necesse est :

(15) Quod ad perimendam arbitrii libertatem solum satis est.

(lib. v. pr. 3.)

See *Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 154-6.

#### IX. THE GRIEF OF REMEMBERING BYGONE HAPPINESS.

For, of fortunes scharp adversité,  
The worste kynde of infortune is this,  
A man to han ben in prosperité,  
And it remembren, when it passed is.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 226, vol. iv. p. 291.)

Sed hoc est, quod recolentem me vehementius coquit. Nam in omni adversitate fortunæ infelicissimum genus est infortunii, fuisse felicem.<sup>1</sup>—  
(*Boethius*, lib. ii. pr. 4.)

#### X. VULTURES TEAR THE STOMACH OF TITYUS IN HELL.

———Syciphus in Helle,  
Whos stomak fowles tyren everemo,  
That hyghten volturis.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, book i. st. 113, p. 140.)

þe fowel þat hyȝt voltor þat etip þe stoinak or þe giser of ticius.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 107.)

#### XI. THE MUTABILITY OF FORTUNE.

For if hire (Fortune's) whiel stynte any thinge to torne  
Thanne cessed she Fortune anon to be.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. i. st. 122, p. 142.)

If fortune bygan to dwelle stable. she cessed[e] þan to ben fortune.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 32.)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dante, *Inferno*, V. 121.

Nessun maggior dolore  
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice  
Nella miseria ; e ciò sa 'l tuo Dottore.

(Compare stanzas 120, 121, p. 142, and stanza 136, p. 146, of 'Troilus and Cryseyde' with pp. 31, 33, 35, and p. 34 of Chaucer's Boethius.)

At omnium mortalium stolidissime, si manere incipit, fors esse desistit.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 1.)

## XII. WORLDLY SELYNESSE

Imedled is with many a bitternesse.  
Ful angwyschous than is, God woote, quod she,  
Condicion of weyn prosperité!  
For oither joies comen nought yfeere,  
Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 110, p. 258.)

þe swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wiþ many[e] bitter-  
nesses.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 42.)

—ful anguissous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. For  
eyþer it comeþ al to-gidre to a wyzt. or ellys it lasteþ not perpetuely.  
(*Ib.* p. 41.)

Quam multis amaritudinibus humanæ felicitatis dulcedo respersa  
est!—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

Anxia enim res est humanorum conditio bonorum, et quæ vel nun-  
quam tota proveniat, vel nunquam perpetua subsistat.—(*Ib.*)

O, brotel wele of mannes joie unstable!  
With what wight so thow be, or how thow pleye,  
Oither he woot that thow joie art muable,  
Or woot it nought, it mot ben on of twayen:  
Now if he woot it not, how may he seyen  
That he hath veray joie and selynesse,  
That is of ignoraunce ay in distresse?

Now if he woote that joie is transitorie,  
As every joie of worldly thyng mot fle,  
Thanne every tyme he that hath in memorie,  
The drede of lesyng maketh hym that he  
May in no parfyte selynesse be:  
And if to lese his joie, he sette not a myte,  
Than semeth it, that joie is worth ful lite.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 111, 112, vol. iv. p. 258.)

(1) What man þat þis toumblyng welefulnesse leediþ, eiþer he woot  
þat [it] is chaungeable. or ellis he woot it nat. And yif he woot it  
not. what blisful fortune may þer be in þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce.

(2) And yif he woot þat it is chaungeable. he mot alwey ben adrad  
þat he ne lese þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may lecen it.



. . . . . For whiche þe continuel drede þat he hæp ne suffriþ hym nat to ben weleful. Or ellys yif he leese it he wene[þ] to be dispised and forleten hit. Certis eke þat is a ful lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is loost.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 43, 44.)

(1) Quem caduca ista felicitas vehit, vel scit eam, vel nescit esse mutabilem. Si nescit, quænam beata sors esse potest ignorantie in cæcitate?

(2) Si scit, metuat necesse est, ne amittat, quod amitti posse non dubitat; quare continuus timor non sinit esse felicem. An vel si amiserit, negligendum putat? Sic quoque perexile bonum est, quod æquo animo feratur amissum.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

### XIII. FORTUNE.

#### ——— Fortune

That semeth trewest when she wol bigyle,

And, when a wight is from hire whiel ithrowe,  
Than laugheth she, and maketh hym the mowe.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 254, vol. iv. p. 299.)

She (Fortune) vseþ ful flatryng familiarité wiþ hem þat she enforcep to bygyle.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 30.)

. . . . . She lauþeþ and scorneþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche she hæp maked wepe wiþ hir free wille . . . . . Yif þat a wyȝt is seyn weleful and ouerþrowe in an houre.—(*Ib.* p. 33.)

In book v., stanza 260, vol. v. p. 75, ~~Chaucer~~ <sup>Boethius</sup> describes how the soul of Hector, after his death, ascended 'up to the holughnesse of the seventhe spere.' In so doing he seems to have had before him met. 1, book 4, of Boethius, where the 'soul' is described as passing into the heaven's utmost sphere, and looking down on the world below. See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 110, 111.

Ætas Prima is of course a metrical version of lib. ii. met. 5.

Hampole speaks of the wonderful sight of the Lynx; perhaps he was indebted to Boethius for the hint.—(See *Boethius*, book 3, pr. 8, p. 81.)

I have seen the following elsewhere:

(1) Value not beauty, for it may be destroyed by a three days' fever.  
(See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 81.)

(2) There is no greater plague than the enmity of thy familiar friend.  
(See *Chaucer's* translation, p. 77.)

Chaucer did not English Boethius second-hand, through any early French version, as some have supposed, but made his translation with the Latin original before him.

Jean de Méung's version, the only early French translation, perhaps, accessible to Chaucer, is not always literal, while the present translation is seldom free or periphrastic, but conforms closely to the Latin, and is at times awkwardly literal. A few passages, taken haphazard, will make this sufficiently clear.

*Et dolor ætatem jussit inesse suam.* And sorow haþ comaunded his age to be in me (p. 4).

Et ma douleur *commanda* a vieillesse

Entrer en moy / ains quen fust hors ieunesse.

*Mors hominum felix, quæ se nec dulcibus annis*

*Inserit, et mæstis sæpe vocata venit.*

þilke deep of men is welful þat ne comeþ not in 3eres þat ben swete (i. *mirie*). but comeþ to wrecches often yclepid. (p. 4.)

On dit la mort des homes estre eueuse

Qui ne vient pas en saison plantureuse

Mais des tristes moult souuent appellee

Elle y affuit nue / seche et pelee.

*Querimoniam lacrymabilem.* Wepli compleynte (p. 5). Fr. ma complainte moy esmouuant a pleurs.

*Styli officio.* Wiþ office of poyntel (p. 5). Fr. (que ie reduisse) par escript.

*Inexhaustus.* Swiche . . . þat it ne myzt[e] not be emptid (p. 5). Fr. inconsumptible.

*Scenicas meretriculas.* Comune strumpetis of siche a place þat men elepen þe theatre (p. 6). Fr. ces ribaudelles fardees.

*Præcipiti profundo.* In ouer-þrowyng depnesse (p. 7).

[L]As que la pensee de lomme

Est troublee et plongie comme

En *abisme precipitee*

Sa propre lumiere gastee.

*Nec peruetusta nec incelebris.* Neyþer ouer-oolde ne vnsolompne (p. 11). Fr. desquelz la memoire nest pas trop ancienne ou non recitee.

*Inter secreta otia.* Among my secre restyng whiles (p. 14). Fr. entre mes secrettes et oyseuses estudes.

*Palatini canes.* þe houndys of þe palays (p. 15). Fr. les chiens du palais.

*Masculæ prolis.* Of þi masculyn children (p. 37). Fr. de ta lignie masculine.

*Ad singularem felicitatis tuæ cumulum venire delectat.* It deliteþ me to comen now to þe singuler vphepyng of þi welefulnesse (p. 37). Fr. Il me plaît venir au singulier monceau de ta felicite.

*Consulare imperium.* Emperie of consulers (p. 51). Fr. l'empire consulaire.

*Hoc ipsum brevis habitaculi.* Of þilke litel habitacle (p. 57). Fr. de cest trespetit habitacle.

*Late patentes plagas.* þe brode shewyng contreys (p. 60).

QViconques tend a gloire vaine

Et le croit estre souueraine

Voye les regions patentes

Du ciel . . . . .

*Ludens hominum cura.* þe pleiyng besines of men (p. 68).

Si quil tollist par doulz estude

Des hommes la sollicitude . . .

*Hausi cælum.* I took heuene (p. 10). Fr. ie . . . regarday le ciel.

*Certamen adversum præfectum prætorii communis commodi ratione suscepi.* I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie for comune profit (p. 15). Fr. ie entrepris lestrif a lencontre du prefect du parlement royal a cause de la commune vtilite.

*At cujus criminis arguimur summam quæris?* But axest þou in somme of what gilt I am accused? (p. 17). Fr. Mais demandes tu la somme du pechie duquel pechie nous sommes arguez?

*Fortuita temeritate.* By fortunouse fortune (p. 26). Fr. par fortuite folie.

*Quos premunt septem gelidi triones.* Alle þe peoples þat ben vndir þe colde sterres þat hyzten þe seuene triones (p. 55). Fr. ceulx de septentrion.

*Ita ego quoque tibi veluti corollarium dabo.* Ryzt so wil I zeue þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune (p. 91). Fr. semblablement ie te donneray ainsi que vng correlaire.

*In stadio.* In þe stadie or in þe forlonge (p. 119). Fr. ou (for au) champ.

*Conjecto.* I coniecte (p. 154). Fr. ie coniecture.

*Nimum . . . adversari ac repugnare videtur.* It semeþ . . . to repugnyn and to contrarien gretly. Fr. Ce semble chose trop contraire et repugnante.

*Universitatis ambitum.* Envirounynge of þe vniuersite (p. 165). Fr. l'auirounement de l'uniuersalite.

*Rationis universum.* Vniuersite of resoun (p. 165). Fr. luniuersalite de Raison.

*Scientiam nunquam deficientis instantiæ rectius aestimabis.* þou shalt demen [it] more ryztfully þat it is science of presence or of instaunce þat neuer ne fayleþ (p. 174). Fr. mais tu la diras plus droittement et mieulx science de instante presentialite non iamais defaillant mais eternelle.

Many of the above examples are very bald renderings of the original, and are only quoted here to show that Chaucer did not make his translation from the French.

Chaucer is not always felicitous in his translations:—thus he translates *clavus atque gubernaculum* by *keye* and a *stiere* (p. 103), and *compendium* (gain, acquisition) by *abreggyng* (abridging, curtailment), p. 151. Many terms make their appearance in English for the first time,—and most of them have become naturalized, and are such as we could ill spare. Some few are rather uncommon, as *gouvernaile* (gubernaculum), p. 27; *arbitre* (arbitrium), p. 154. As Chaucer takes the trouble to explain *inestimable* (inæstimabilis), p. 158, it could not have been a very familiar term.

Our translator evidently took note of various readings, for on p. 31 he notes a variation of the original. On p. 51 he uses *armurers* (= armures) to render *arma*, though most copies agree in reading *arva*.

There are numerous glosses and explanations of particular passages, which seem to be interpolated by Chaucer himself. Thus he explains what is meant by the *heritage of Socrates* (p. 10, 11); he gives the meaning of *coemption* (p. 15); of *Euripus* (p. 33); of the *porch* (p. 166).<sup>1</sup> Some of his definitions are very quaint; as, for instance, that of Tragedy—‘*a dité of a prosperité for a tyme þat endiþ in wrechednesse*’ (p. 35). One would think that the following definition of Tragedian would be rather superfluous after this,—‘*a maker of dites þat hyȝten (are called) tregedies*’ (p. 77).

*Mellifui . . . oris Homerus*

is thus quaintly Englished: *Homer wiþ þe hony mouþe, þat is to seyn. homer wiþ þe swete dites* (p. 153).

<sup>1</sup> See pages 39, 50, 61, 94, 111, 133, 149, 153, 159.

The present translation of the *De Consolatione* is taken from Additional MS. 10,340, which is supposed to be the *oldest* manuscript that exists in our public libraries. After it was all copied out and ready for press, Mr Bradshaw was kind enough to procure me, for the purpose of collation, the loan of the Camb. University MS. Ii. 3. 21, from which the various readings at the foot of the pages are taken.

Had I had an opportunity of examining the Cambridge MS. carefully throughout before the work was so far advanced, I should certainly have selected it in preference to the text now given to the reader. Though not so ancient as the British Museum MS., it is far more correct in its grammatical inflexions, and is no doubt a copy of an older and very accurate text.

The Additional MS. is written by a scribe who was unacquainted with the force of the final *-e*. Thus he adds it to the preterites of strong verbs, which do not require it; he omits it in the preterites of weak verbs where it is wanted, and attaches it to passive participles (of weak verbs), where it is superfluous. The scribe of the Cambridge MS. is careful to preserve the final *-e* where it is a sign (1) of the definite declension of the adjective; (2) of the plural adjective; (3) of the infinitive mood; (4) of the preterite of weak verbs; (5) of present participles;<sup>1</sup> (6) of the 2nd pers. pret. indic. of strong verbs; (7) of adverbs; (8) of an older vowel ending.

The Addit. MS. has frequently *thilk* (singular and plural), and *-nes* (in *wrechednes*, &c.), when the Camb. MS. has *thilke*<sup>2</sup> and *-nesse*.

For further differences the reader may consult the numerous collations at the foot of the page.

If the Chaucer Society obtains that amount of patronage from the literary public which it deserves, but unfortunately has yet not succeeded in getting, so that it may be enabled to go on with the great work which has been so successfully commenced, then the time may come when I shall have the opportunity of editing the Camb. MS. of Chaucer's *Boethius* for that Society, and lovers of Early English Literature will have two texts instead of one.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Canterbury Tales* we find participles in *-yngē*.

<sup>2</sup> It is nearly always *thilke* in the *Canterbury Tales*.

## APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION.

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THE last of the ancients, and one who forms a link between the classical period of literature and that of the middle ages, in which he was a favourite author, is Boethius, a man of fine genius, and interesting both from his character and his death. It is well known that after filling the dignities of Consul and Senator in the court of Theodoric, he fell a victim to the jealousy of a sovereign, from whose memory, in many respects glorious, the stain of that blood has never been effaced. The *Consolation of Philosophy*, the chief work of Boethius, was written in his prison. Few books are more striking from the circumstances of their production. Last of the classic writers, in style not impure, though displaying too lavishly that poetic exuberance which had distinguished the two or three preceding centuries, in elevation of sentiment equal to any of the philosophers, and mingling a Christian sanctity with their lessons, he speaks from his prison in the swan-like tones of dying eloquence. The philosophy that consoled him in bonds, was soon required in the sufferings of a cruel death. Quenched in his blood, the lamp he had trimmed with a skilful hand gave no more light; the language of Tully and Virgil soon ceased to be spoken; and many ages were to pass away, before learned diligence restored its purity, and the union of genius with imitation taught a few modern writers to surpass in eloquence the Latinity of Boethius.—(Hallam's *Literature of Europe*, i. 2, 4th ed. 1854.)

The Senator Boethius is the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully could have acknowledged for their countryman. As a wealthy orphan, he inherited the patrimony and honours of the Anician family, a name ambitiously assumed by the kings and emperors of the age; and the appellation of Manlius asserted his genuine or fabulous descent from a race of consuls and dictators, who had repulsed the Gauls from the Capitol, and sacrificed their sons to the discipline of the Republic. In the youth of Boethius the studies of Rome were not totally abandoned; a Virgil is now extant, corrected by the hand of a consul; and the professors of grammar, rhetoric, and jurisprudence, were maintained in their privileges and pensions by the liberality of the Goths. But the erudition of the Latin language was insufficient to satiate his ardent curiosity; and

Boethius is said to have employed eighteen laborious years in the schools of Athens, which were supported by the zeal, the learning, and the diligence of Proclus and his disciples. The reason and piety of their Roman pupil were fortunately saved from the contagion of mystery and magic, which polluted the groves of the Academy, but he imbibed the spirit, and imitated the method, of his dead and living masters, who attempted to reconcile the strong and subtle sense of Aristotle with the devout contemplation and sublime fancy of Plato. After his return to Rome, and his marriage with the daughter of his friend, the patrician Symmachus, Boethius still continued, in a palace of ivory and [glass] to prosecute the same studies. The Church was edified by his profound defence of the orthodox creed against the Arian, the Eutychian, and the Nestorian heresies; and the Catholic unity was explained or exposed in a formal treatise by the *indifference* of three distinct though consubstantial persons. For the benefit of his Latin readers, his genius submitted to teach the first elements of the arts and sciences of Greece. The geometry of Euclid, the music of Pythagoras, the arithmetic of Nicomachus, the mechanics of Archimedes, the astronomy of Ptolemy, the theology of Plato, and the logic of Aristotle, with the commentary of Porphyry, were translated and illustrated by the indefatigable pen of the Roman senator. And he alone was esteemed capable of describing the wonders of art, a sun-dial, a water-clock, or a sphere which represented the motions of the planets. From these abstruse speculations, Boethius stooped, or, to speak more truly, he rose to the social duties of public and private life: the indigent were relieved by his liberality; and his eloquence, which flattery might compare to the voice of Demosthenes or Cicero, was uniformly exerted in the cause of innocence and humanity. Such conspicuous merit was felt and rewarded by a discerning prince: the dignity of Boethius was adorned with the titles of consul and patrician, and his talents were usefully employed in the important station of master of the offices. Notwithstanding the equal claims of the East and West, his two sons were created, in their tender youth, the consuls of the same year. On the memorable day of their inauguration, they proceeded in solemn pomp from their palace to the forum amidst the applause of the senate and people; and their joyful father, the true Consul of Rome, after pronouncing an oration in the praise of his royal benefactor, distributed a triumphal largess in the games of the circus. Prosperous in his fame and fortunes, in his public honours and private alliances, in the cultivation of science and the consciousness of virtue, Boethius might have been styled happy, if that precarious epithet could be safely applied before the last term of the life of man.

A philosopher, liberal of his wealth and parsimonious of his time, might be insensible to the common allurements of ambition, the thirst of gold and employment. And some credit may be due to the asseveration of Boethius, that he had reluctantly obeyed the divine Plato, who enjoins every virtuous citizen to rescue the state from the usurpation of vice and ignorance. For the integrity of his public conduct he appeals to the

memory of his country. His authority had restrained the pride and oppression of the royal officers, and his eloquence had delivered Paulianus from the dogs of the palace. He had always pitied, and often relieved, the distress of the provincials, whose fortunes were exhausted by public and private rapine; and Boethius alone had courage to oppose the tyranny of the Barbarians, elated by conquest, excited by avarice, and, as he complains, encouraged by impunity. In these honourable contests his spirit soared above the consideration of danger, and perhaps of prudence; and we may learn from the example of Cato, that a character of pure and inflexible virtue is the most apt to be misled by prejudice, to be heated by enthusiasm, and to confound private enmities with public justice. The disciple of Plato might exaggerate the infirmities of nature, and the imperfections of society; and the mildest form of a Gothic kingdom, even the weight of allegiance and gratitude, must be insupportable to the free spirit of a Roman patriot. But the favour and fidelity of Boethius declined in just proportion with the public happiness; and an unworthy colleague was imposed to divide and control the power of the master of the offices. In the last gloomy season of Theodoric, he indignantly felt that he was a slave; but as his master had only power over his life, he stood without arms and without fear against the face of an angry Barbarian, who had been provoked to believe that the safety of the senate was incompatible with his own. The Senator Albinus was accused and already convicted on the presumption of *hoping*, as it was said, the liberty of Rome.

"If Albinus be criminal," exclaimed the orator, "the senate and myself are all guilty of the same crime. If we are innocent, Albinus is equally entitled to the protection of the laws." These laws might not have punished the simple and barren wish of an unattainable blessing; but they would have shown less indulgence to the rash confession of Boethius, that, had he known of a conspiracy, the tyrant never should. The advocate of Albinus was soon involved in the danger and perhaps the guilt of his client; their signature (which they denied as a forgery) was affixed to the original address, inviting the emperor to deliver Italy from the Goths; and three witnesses of honourable rank, perhaps of infamous reputation, attested the treasonable designs of the Roman patrician. Yet his innocence must be presumed, since he was deprived by Theodoric of the means of justification, and rigorously confined in the tower of Pavia, while the senate, at the distance of five hundred miles, pronounced a sentence of confiscation and death against the most illustrious of its members. At the command of the Barbarians, the occult science of a philosopher was stigmatized with the names of sacrilege and magic. A devout and dutiful attachment to the senate was condemned as criminal by the trembling voices of the senators themselves; and their ingratitude deserved the wish or prediction of Boethius, that, after him, none should be found guilty of the same offence.

While Boethius, oppressed with fetters, expected each moment the sentence or the stroke of death, he composed in the tower of Pavia the



*Consolation of Philosophy* ; a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully, but which claims incomparable merit from the barbarism of the times and the situation of the author. The celestial guide, whom he had so long invoked at Rome and Athens, now condescended to illumine his dungeon, to revive his courage, and to pour into his wounds her salutary balm. She taught him to compare his long prosperity and his recent distress, and to conceive new hopes from the inconstancy of fortune. Reason had informed him of the precarious condition of her gifts; experience had satisfied him of their real value; he had enjoyed them without guilt; he might resign them without a sigh, and calmly disdain the impotent malice of his enemies, who had left him happiness, since they had left him virtue. From the earth, Boethius ascended to heaven in search of the SUPREME GOOD; explored the metaphysical labyrinth of chance and destiny, of prescience and free-will, of time and eternity; and generously attempted to reconcile the perfect attributes of the Deity with the apparent disorders of his moral and physical government. Such topics of consolation, so obvious, so vague, or so abstruse, are ineffectual to subdue the feelings of human nature. Yet the sense of misfortune may be diverted by the labour of thought; and the sage who could artfully combine in the same work the various riches of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, must already have possessed the intrepid calmness which he affected to seek. Suspense, the worst of evils, was at length determined by the ministers of death, who executed, and perhaps exceeded, the inhuman mandate of Theodoric. A strong cord was fastened round the head of Boethius, and forcibly tightened till his eyes almost started from their sockets; and some mercy may be discovered in the milder torture of beating him with clubs till he expired. But his genius survived to diffuse a ray of knowledge over the darkest ages of the Latin world; the writings of the philosopher were translated by the most glorious of the English kings, and the third emperor of the name of Otho removed to a more honourable tomb the bones of a Catholic saint, who, from his Arian persecutors, had acquired the honours of martyrdom and the fame of miracles. In the last hours of Boethius, he derived some comfort from the safety of his two sons, of his wife, and of his father-in-law, the venerable Symmachus. But the grief of Symmachus was indiscreet, and perhaps disrespectful; he had presumed to lament, he might dare to revenge, the death of an injured friend. He was dragged in chains from Rome to the palace of Ravenna; and the suspicions of Theodoric could only be appeased by the blood of an innocent and aged senator.—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 1838, vol. vii. p. 45—52 (without the notes).

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### [I]NCIPIT TABULA LIBRI BŌICII DE CONSOLACIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

[*Additional MS. 10,340, fol. 3.*]

#### LIBER PRIMUS.

[fol. 3.]

- 1 Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.
- 2 Hic dum mecum tacitus.
- 3 Heu *quam* precipiti.
- 4 Set medicine inquit tempus.
- 5 Tunc me discussa.
- 6 Haut <sup>1</sup> aliter tristicie. 1 MS. hanc.
- 7 Quisquis composito.
- 8 Sentis ne inquit.
- 9 O stelliferi conditor orbis.
- 10 Hic ubi continuato dolore.
- 11 Cum phebi radijs.
- 12 Primum igitur pateris rogacionibus.
- 13 Nubibus atris condita.

#### EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

#### LIBER SECUNDUS.

- 1 Postea paulisper <sup>2</sup> conticuit. 2 MS. lilper.
- 2 Hec cum superba.
- 3 Uellem autem pauca.
- 4 Si quantas rapidis.
- 5 His igitur si *et* pro se.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

- 6 Cum primo polo.
- 7 Tunc ego uera inquam.
- 8 Contraque.
- 9 Quisquis ualet perhennem cantus.
- 10 Set cum rationum iam in te.
- 11 Felix in mirum iam prior etas.
- 12 Quid autem de dignitatibus.
- 13 Nouimus quantos dederat.
- 14 Tum ego scis inquam.
- 15 Quicumque solam mente.
- 16 Set ne me inexorabile.
- 17 Quod mundus stabile fide.

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

## LIBER TERTIUS.

- 1 Iam tantum illa.
- 2 Qui serere ingenium.
- 3 Tunc defixo paululum.
- 4 Quantas rerum flectat.
- 5 Uos quoque terrena animalia.
- 6 Quamuis fluenter diues.
- 7 Set dignitatibus.
- 8 Quamuis se tiro.
- 9 An uero regna.
- 10 Qui se ualet esse potentem.
- 11 Gloria uero quam fallax.
- 12 Omne hominum genus in terris.
- 13 Quid autem de corporibus.
- 14 Habet hoc uoluptas.
- 15 Nichil igitur dubium est.
- 16 Heu que miseros tramite.
- 17 Hactenus mendacio formam.
- 18 O qui perpetua.
- 19 Quoniam igitur qui scit.
- 20 Nunc omnes pariter.
- 21 Assencior inquam cuncta.

- 22 Quisque profunda.
- 23 Tunc ego platoni *inquam*.
- 24 Felix qui poterit.

EXPLICIT LIBER TERTIUS.

#### LIBER QUARTUS.

- 1 Hec cum philosophia.
- 2 Sunt etenim penne.
- 3 Tunc ego pape *inquam*.
- 4 Quos uides sedere celsos.
- 5 Uides ne igitur quanto.
- 6 U[e]la naricij ducis.
- 7 Tunc ego fateor *inquam*.
- 8 Quid tantos iuuat.
- 9 Huic ego uideo *inquam*.
- 10 Si quis arcturi<sup>1</sup> sydera. <sup>1</sup> MS. arituri.
- 11 Ita est *inquam*.
- 12 Si uis celsi iura.
- 13 Iam ne igitur uides.
- 14 Bella bis quinis.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS.

#### INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

- 1 Dixerat orac<sup>o</sup>nis *que* cursum.
- 2 Rupis achemenie.
- 3 Animaduerto *inquam*.
- 4 Puro clarum lumine.
- 5 Tamen ego en *inquam*.
- 6 Que nam discors.
- 7 Tamen illa uetus.
- 8 Quondam porticus attulit.
- 9 Quod si in corporibus.
- 10 Quam uarijs figuris.
- 11 Quoniam igitur uti paulo ante.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUINTUS ET ULTIMUS.



[\* fol. 3 b.]

## \* LIBER PRIMUS.

[The fyrste  
Metur.]

INCIPIT LIBER BOICII DE CONSOLACIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

*Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.*Boethius deplores  
his misfortunes  
in the following  
pathetic elegy.

**A**llas I wepyng am constreined to bygynne vers of  
sorouful matere. ¶ þat whilom in florysching

studie made delitable ditees. For loo rendyng muses  
4 of poetes enditen to me þinges to be writen. and dreary  
vers of wrecchednes weten my face wiþ verray teers.  
¶ At þe leest no drede ne myzt[e] ouer-come þo muses.

ypalage  
antithesisLaments his  
immature old  
age.

7 þat þei ne weren felawes *and* folweden my wey. þat is  
to seyne when I was exiled. þei þat weren glorie of  
my youȝth whilom weleful *and* grene conforten now þe  
sorouful werdes of me olde man. for elde is comen vn-  
warly vpon me hasted by þe harmes þat I haue. *and*

Death turns a  
deaf ear to the  
wretched.

12 sorou hap comaunded his age to be in me. ¶ Heeres  
hore ben schad ouertymelyche vpon myne heued. *and*  
þe slak[e] skyn trembleþ vpon myn emty body. þilk[e]  
deef of men is welful þat ne comeþ not in ȝeres þat  
ben swete (.i. mirie.) but comeþ to wrecches often  
17 yclepid.

When Fortune  
was favourable  
Death came near  
Boethius,

¶ Allas allas wiþ how deaf an eere deep cruel  
tourneþ away fro wrecches *and* naieþ to closen wep-  
yng eyen. ¶ While fortune vnfeifful fauored[e] me  
wiþ lyȝte goodes (.s. temporels.) þe sorouful houre þat  
22 is to seyne þe deep had[de] almost dreynt myne heued.

but in his  
adversity life is  
unpleasantly  
protracted.

¶ But now for fortune clowdy hap chaunged hir dis-  
ceyuable chere to me warde. myn vnpiouse lijf draweþ  
a long vnagreable dwellynges in me. ¶ O ȝe my

- 1 *of*—MS. of of.  
2 *florysching*—floryssyng  
3 *rendyng*—rendyng  
4 *be*—ben  
5 *wrecchednes*—wrecched-  
nesse  
6 *leest*—leeste  
7 *myzt[e] ouer-come*—myhte  
ouercomen  
8 *seyne when*—seyn whan  
9 *youȝth*—MS. þoȝt. C. yowthe  
10 *sorouful werdes*—sorful  
wriordes [i. fata]  
11 *sorou*—sorwe

- 12 *hap*—MS. hape  
*be*—ben  
13 *hore*—hoore  
*ben*—arn  
*myne*—myn  
14 *slak[e]*—slake  
*emty*—emtyd  
*þilk[e]*—thilke  
15 *welful*—weleful  
*comeþ not*—comth nat  
16 *.i. mirie*—omitted  
17 *tourneþ*—torneth  
*naieþ*—nayteth  
*wepyng*—wepyngs

- 20 *While*—Whil  
*faured[e]*—faurede  
21 *lyȝte*—lyhte  
*.s. temporels*—omitted  
*sorouful houre*—sorwful  
houre  
22 *seyne*—seyn  
*had[de]*—hadde  
*myne*—myn  
23 *hap*—MS. hape  
*chaunged*—chaungyd  
*hyre deceyu-  
able*—chaungyd hyre de-  
ceyuable  
24 *vnpiouse lijf*—vnpietous  
lyf

frendes what or wherto anaunted[e] 3e me to be wele-  
ful : for he þat haþ fallen stood not in stedfast degree.

Why did his  
friends call  
him happy ?  
He stood not  
firm that hath  
thus fallen.

## HIC DUM MECUM TACITUS.

IN þe mene while þat I stille recorded[e] þise þinges [The firste  
wip my self. *and* markede my wepli compleynte wip 29  
office of poyntel. I saw stondyng aboue þe heyzt of my Philosophy  
heued a woman of ful greet reuerence by semblaunt appears to  
hir eyen brennyng *and* clere seing ouer þe comune like a beautiful  
myzt of men. wip a lijfly colour *and* wip swiche vigoure 33  
*and* strenkeþ þat it ne myzt[e] not be emptid. ¶ Al  
were it so þat sche was ful of so greet age. þat men ne and of great age.  
wolde not trowe in no manere þat sche were of oure 36  
elde. þe stature of hir was of a doutous iugement. for Her height could  
sumtyme sche constreyned[e] *and* schronk hir seluen not be determined,  
lyche to þe comune mesure of men. *and* sumtyme it  
semed[e] þat sche touched[e] þe heuene wip þe heyzte 40  
of hir heued. *and* when sche hef hir heued heyer sche  
perced[e] þe selue heuene. so þat þe syzt of men lokyng  
was in ydel. ¶ Hir clopes weren maked of ryzt delye  
predes *and* subtil crafte of perdurable matere. þe wyche 44  
clopes sche hadde wouen wip hir owen hondes : as I  
knew wel aftir by hir selfe. declaryng *and* schewyng  
to me þe beaute. þe wiche clopes a derkenes of a for-  
leten *and* dispised elde had[de] duskid *and* dirkid as  
it is wont to dirken by-smoked ymages. ¶ In þe ne-

Philosophy  
appears to  
Boethius,

like a beautiful  
woman,

and of great age.

Her height could  
not be determined,

for there were  
times when she  
raised her head  
higher than the  
heavens.

Her clothes were  
finely wrought  
and indissoluble,

but dark *and*  
dusky, like old  
besmoked images.

26 anaunted[e]—anauntede  
be—ben  
27 haþ—MS. haþe  
not—nat  
stedfast—stidefast  
28 In þe mene—omitted  
recorded[e]—recordede  
30 saw—MS. sawe, C. sawh  
stondyng aboue—MS. ston-  
dyng aboue, C. stond-  
inge abouen  
heyzt—heyhte  
my—myn  
31 greet—gret  
32 brennyng—brennyng  
clere seing—cleer seynge  
33 swiche—swych  
34 strenkeþ—strengthe  
it—emptid—it myhte

nat ben emted  
34 Al—alle  
36 wolde—trowe—wolden  
nat trowen  
37 iugement—Iuggement  
38 sumtyme—somytyme  
constreyned[e]—con-  
streynede  
schronk—MS. schronke,  
C. shronk  
39 lyche—lyk  
40 semed[e]—smede  
touched[e]—towchede  
41 when—whan  
hef—MS. heued, C. hef  
heyer—hyere  
42 perced[e]—percede  
syzt—syhte  
lokyng—lookyng

44 crafte—craft  
45 wouen—MS. wonnen, C.  
wouen  
ouen hondes—owne  
handes  
46 knew—MS. knewe, C.  
knewh  
selfe declaryng—self de-  
clarynge  
schewyng—shewyng  
47 derkenes—dirknesse  
forleten—forletyn  
48 dispised—despised  
had[de] duskid—hadde  
duskid  
dirkid—derked  
49 by-smoked—the smokede  
neperest[e]—nethreste

On the lower hem  
of her garment  
was the letter II  
and on the  
upper O.

Between the  
letters were  
steps like a  
ladder.

Philosophy's  
garments were  
tattered and  
torn, and pieces  
had been carried  
violently off.

In her right hand  
she bore her  
books, and in her  
left a sceptre.

Philosophy bids  
the Muses leave  
Boethius,

[\* fol. 4.]

as they only  
increase his  
sorrow with their  
sweet venom.

They may  
accustom the  
mind to bear  
grief, but cannot  
free it from its  
malady.

perest[e] hem or bordure of þese cloþes men redder  
ywouen in swiche a gregkysche .P. þat signifief þe lijf  
actif. And abouen þat lettre in þe heyzest[e] bordure

53 a gregkysche T. þat signifief þe lijf contemplatif.

¶ And by-twene þese two lettres þere weren seien de-  
grees nobly wrouzt in manere of laddres. By wyche

56 degrees men myzt[en] clymbe fro þe nepemast[e] lettre  
to þe ouermast[e]. ¶ Naþeles hondes of sum men  
hadde korue þat cloþe by vyolence and by strenkeþ.

¶ And eueryche man of hem hadde born away syche

60 peces as he myzte geet[e]. ¶ And forsoþe þis forsaide  
woman ber bookes in hir ryzt honde. and in hir lefte  
honde sche ber a ceptre. ¶ And when sche sauþ þese  
poetical muses aprochen aboute my bedde. and endyt-

64 yng wordes to my wepynges. sche was a lytel ameued  
and glowed[e] wiþ cruel eyen. ¶ Who quod sche hap  
suffred aprochen to þis seek[e] man þise comune strum-  
petis of siche a place þat \*men clepen þe theatre.

68 ¶ þe wyche only ne asswagen not his sorowes. wiþ no  
remedies. but þei wolde fede and norysche hem wiþ  
swete venym. ¶ Forsoþe þise ben þo þat wiþ þornes  
and prykkynge of talent; or affeccious wiche þat

72 ben no þing fruteþyng nor profitable destroyen þe  
cornes plenteuouse of frutes of reson. ¶ For þei  
holden þe hertes of men in usage. but þei ne delyuere  
not folk fro maladye. but if ȝe muses hadde wiþdrawen

50 þese—thise  
51 swiche—omitted  
gregkysche—grekysshe  
signifief—sygnifieth  
52 heyzest[e]—heyeste  
54 by-twene þese—bytwixen  
thise  
þere—ther  
seien—seyen  
55 nobly wrouzt—nobely y-  
wrought  
wyche—whiche  
56 myzt[en] clymbe—myhten  
clymbyn  
nepemast[e]—nethereste  
57 ouermast[e]—vppereste  
sum—some  
58 hadde korue—hadden  
koruen

58 cloþe—cloth  
strenkeþ—strengthe  
59 born—MS. borne, C. born  
away syche—away swiche  
60 geet[e]—geten  
forsaide—forseide  
61 ber—MS. bere, C. bar  
bookes—smale bookes  
honde—hand  
lefte honde—left hand  
62 ber—MS. bere, C. baar  
sauþ þese—say thise  
63 bedde—bed  
endityng—enditynge  
64 ameued—amoued  
65 glowed[e]—glowede  
hap—MS. haþe, C. hath  
66 seek[e]—sike  
þise—the

66 strumpetis—strompetes  
67 siche—swich  
clepen—clepyn  
68 only ne—nat onely ne  
not his—nat hise  
no—none  
69 woldefede—wolden feeden  
norysche hem—noryssyn  
hym  
72 ben—ne ben  
fruteþyng—fructefyng  
73 cornes plenteuouse—corn  
plentyuous  
74 þe and ne—both omitted  
75 not—nat  
if ȝe—MS. if þe, C. yif ȝe  
hadde—hadden

fro me wip þoure flateries. any vnkonnyng *and* vnprofit-  
 able man as men ben wont to fynde comunely amonges  
 þe peple. I wolde wene suffre þe lasse greuously.  
 ¶ For-why in syche an vnprofitable man myne ententes  
 weren no þing endamaged. ¶ But 3e wipdrawen me 80  
 þis man þat haþ ben norysched in studies or scoles of  
 Eleaticis *and* of achademicis in grece. ¶ But goþ now  
 raper away 3e meremaydenes wyche ben swete til it  
 be at þe laste. *and* suffreþ þis man to be cured *and* 84  
 heled by myne muses. þat is to say by notful sciences.  
 ¶ And þus þis compaygnie of muses I-blamed casten  
 wropely þe chere adounward to þe erþe *and* schewyng 87  
 by redenesse hir schame þei passeden sorowfully þe  
 preschefolde. ¶ And I of whom þe syzt plunged in  
 teres was derked so þat I ne myzt[e] not knowe what  
 þat woman was of so imperial auctorite. ¶ I wex al 91  
 a-besid *and* astoned. *and* caste my syzt adoune in to þe  
 erþe. *and* bygan stille forto abide what sche wolde dor  
 afterwarde. ¶ þo come sche nere *and* sette hir down  
 vpon þe vterrest[e] corner of my bedde. *and* sche by- 95  
 holdyng my chere þat was cast to þe erþe heuy *and*  
 greuous of wepyng. compleinede wip þise wordes þat I  
 schal sey þe perturbacioun of my pouzt.

Philosophy is  
 deeply grieved,  
 because they have  
 not seduced one  
 of the profane,

but one who has  
 been brought up  
 in Eleatic and  
 Academic studies.

She bids the  
 syrens begone.

Blushing for  
 shame they pass  
 the threshold.

Boethius is  
 astonished at the  
 presence of the  
 august dame.

Philosophy  
 expresses her  
 concern for  
 Boethius.

98

## HEU QUAM PRECIPITI MERSA PROFUNDO.

Alas how þe pouzt of man dreint in ouer þrowyng [The 2de Metur.]  
 depnesse dulleþ *and* forletip hys propre clere-  
 nesse. myntyng to gone in to foreyne derknesses as  
 ofte as hys anoious bisines wexip wip-outen mesure.

Drowned in  
 the depth of cares  
 the mind loses  
 its proper  
 clearness.

76 *vnkonnyng*—vnkunnyng  
 78 *peple*—poepel  
 79 *syche*—awhiche  
*myne*—myn  
 80 *weeren*—ne weeren  
*3e*—ye  
 81 *haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hath  
*ben*—be  
*scoles*—schoolles  
 82 *goþ*—MS. goþe, C. goth  
 83 *wyche*—whiche þat  
 85 *say*—sryn  
 86 *notful*—noteful

86 *I-blamed*—Iblamyd  
 87 *wropely*—wrothly  
*adounward*—downward  
 88 *redenesse*—rednesse  
*sorowfully*—sorwfully  
 89 *preschefolde*—thresshfold  
*syzt*—syhte  
 90 *derked*—dyrked  
*myzt[e]*—knowe—myhte  
*nat*—known  
 91 *wex*—wax  
 92 *a-besid*—abeyashed  
*caste*—cast

92 *adouns in to*—down to  
 93 *don*—MS. done  
 95 *terrest[e] corner*—vt-  
*tereste corners*  
*bedde*—bed  
 97 *compleinede*—com-  
*pleyn[de]*  
 98 *sey*—seyen  
 101 *gone*—goon  
 102 *bisines*—bysynesne  
*outen*—owte

Man in his  
freedom knew  
each region of  
the sky,

105 *bat* is dryuen to *and* fro wip worldly wyndes. ¶ *his*  
man *bat* sumtyme was fre to whom *þe* heuene was open

the motions of  
the planets, and  
was wont to  
investigate the  
causes of storms,

*and* knowen *and* was wont to gone in heuenelyche  
papes. *and* sau3 *þe* lyztnesse of *þe* rede sunne. *and* sau3  
*þe* sterres of *þe* colde moone. *and* wyche sterre in  
heuene vseþ wandryng risorses yflit by dyuerse speres.  
¶ *his* man ouer comere hadde comprehendid al *þis* by  
noubre. of accountyng in astronomye. ¶ And ouer  
*þis* he was wont to seche *þe* causes whennes *þe* soun-

the nature and  
properties of the  
seasons,

112 yng wyndes moeuen *and* bisien *þe* smoþe water of *þe*  
see. *and* what spirit turneþ *þe* stable heuene. *and*  
whi *þe* sterre ryseþ oute of *þe* reede eest. to falle  
in *þe* westren wawes. *and* what attempriþ *þe* lusty  
houres of *þe* fyrste somer sesoun *þat* hiȝteþ *and* ap-

and the hidden  
causes of nature.

117 paraileþ *þe* erþe wip rosene floures. ¶ And who  
makeþ *þat* plenteuouse autumpne in fulle ȝeres fletiþ  
wip heuy grapes. ¶ And eke *þis* man was wont to  
telle *þe* dyuerses causes of nature *þat* weren yhid.

But now, alas,  
he is constrained  
to keep his face  
to the ground.

121 ¶ Allas now lieþ he emptid of lyȝt of hys þouȝt. *and*  
hys nekke is pressid wip heuy cheynes *and* bereþ his  
chere enclined adoune for *þe* greet[e] weyȝt. *and* is

124 constreynd to loke on foule erþe.

## SET MEDICINE INQUIT TEMPUS.

[The 11<sup>th</sup> prose.]

More need of  
medicaine than of  
complaint.

**B**ut tyme is now *quod* sche of medicine more þen of  
compleynte. ¶ Forsoþe þen sche entenyng to  
me warde wip al *þe* lokyng of hir eyen saide. ¶ Art

128 not þou he *quod* sche *þat* sumtyme I-norschid wip my  
mylke *and* fostre[d] wip my meetes were ascaped *and*  
comen to corage of a perfit man. ¶ Certys I ȝaf *þe*

Philosophy  
addresses  
Boethius.

103 *worldly*—wordely  
104 *sumtyme*—whilom  
105 *gone*—goon  
106 *papes*—paathes  
*sau3*—sawh  
*lyztnesse*—lythnesse  
*sunne*—sonne  
*sau3*—MS. sue, C. sawgh  
107 *wyche*—which  
108 *risorses*—recourses  
111 *seche*—seken  
*sounyng*—sownyng

114 *ryseþ oute*—aryseth owt  
*falle*—fallen  
115 *westren*—westrene  
116 *fyrste*—fyrst  
119 *eke*—ek  
120 *dyuerses*—diuerse  
*yhid*—MS. yhidde  
121 *lieþ*—lith  
*emptid*—emtd  
123 *adoune*—adown  
*greet[e]* *weyȝt* — grete  
weyhte

124 *loke*—*foule*—looken on  
the fool  
125, 126 *þen*—than  
127 *al*—alle  
*saide*—seyde  
128 *sumtyme*—whilom  
*I-norschid*—MS. I-nor-  
schide, C. noryssed  
129 *fostre[d]*—fostered  
*my*—myne  
130 *Certys*—Certes  
*ȝaf*, *yaf*

syche armures þat ȝif þou þi self ne haddest first caste  
hem away. þei schulden haue defendid þe in sykernesse 132

þat may not be ouer-comen. ¶ Knowest þou me not.

\* Why art þou stille. is it for schame or for astonyng. [\* fol. 4 b.]

It were me leuer þat it were for schame. but it semeþ  
me þat astonyng haþ oppressed þe. ¶ And whan  
sche say me not oonly stille. but wiþ-uten office of 137

tonge *and* al doumbe. sche leide hir honde softly vpon  
my brest *and* seide. ¶ Here nis no peril *quod* sche.  
¶ He is fallen in to a litargie. whiche þat is a comune  
sekenes to hertes þat ben desceiued. ¶ He haþ a litel 141

forȝeten hym self. but certis he schal lyȝtly remembren  
hym self. ¶ Ȝif so be þat he haþ knowen me or now.  
*and* þat he may so done I wil wipe a litel hys eyen.  
þat ben derked by þe cloude of mortel pinges ¶ þise  
wordes seide sche. and wiþ þe lappe of hir garment 146

yplitid in a frounce sche dried[e] myn eyen þat were  
ful of þe wawes of my wepynges. and dries up his  
tears.

## TUNC ME DISCUSSA.

þus when þat nyȝt was discussed *and* chased away. [The 3<sup>rd</sup> Meter.]  
derknesses forleffen me. *and* to myn eyen repeyre  
aȝeyne her firste strenkeþ. and ryȝt by ensample as 151

þe sonne is hid when þe sterres ben clustred. þat is to  
sey when sterres ben couered wiþ cloudes by a swifte  
wynde þat hyȝt chorus. *and* þat þe firmament stont  
derked by wete ploungy cloudes. and þat þe sterres not  
apperen vpon heuene. ¶ So þat þe nyȝt semeþ sprad 156

vpon erþe. ¶ Yif þan þe wynde þat hyȝt borias

131 *syche*—swiche  
ȝif—yif  
caste—C. cast  
132 *away*—away  
*schulden haue*—sholden  
han  
133 *not be*—nat ben  
*Knowest þou*—knowestow  
134 *art þou*—artow  
136 *hap*—MS. haþe  
138 *tonge*—tunge  
*doumbe*—dowmb  
*honde*—hand

139 *Here*—her  
140 *litargie whiche*—litarge  
which  
141 *sekenes*—sykenesse  
141, 143 *hap*—MS. haþe  
144 *done*—doon  
*wil wipe*—wol wipen  
146 *garment*—garnement  
147 *dried[e]*—dryede  
*were*—weeren  
148 *ful*—fulle  
149 *when*—whan  
150 *myn*—myne

150 *repeyre*—repeyredo  
151 *aȝeyne*—omitted  
*her firste*—hir fyrst  
152 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hid  
*when*—whan  
153 *sey*—seyn  
*when*—whan  
154 *hyȝt*—heyhte  
*chorus*—MS. thorns  
*stont*—MS. stonde, C. stant  
157 *þan*—thanne  
*wynde*—wynd  
*hyȝt*—hyhte

158 sent out of þe kaues of þe contre of Trace betiþ þis  
causing the return of the hidden day, when the sun smites our wondering sight with his sudden light. nyȝt. þat is to seyn chasiþ it away *and* descouereþ þe  
 closed day. ¶ þan schineþ phebus yshaken wiþ  
 sodeyne lyȝt *and* smyteþ wiþ hys bemes in meruelyng  
 162 eyen.

<sup>1</sup> MS. hanc.

HAUT <sup>1</sup> ALITER TRISTOIE.

[The 3<sup>d</sup> prose.]  
 The clouds of sorrow being dispelled, Boethius recollects the features of his Physician,

whom he discovers to be Philosophy.

169 *and* I seide þus. ¶ O þou maistresse of alle uertues  
He addresses her. descendid fro þe souereyne sete. Whi art þou comen  
 in to þis solitarie place of myn exil. ¶ Art þou comen

172 for þou art mad coupable wiþ me of fals[e] blames.  
She expresses her concern for him, ¶ O *quod* sche my norry scholde I forsake þe now. *and*  
 scholde I not parte wiþ þe by comune trauaille þe charge

176 it nar[e] not leueful ne sittynge to philosophie to leten  
and tells him that she is willing to share his misfortunes. wiþ-outen compaignie þe wey of hym þat is innocent.  
 ¶ Scholde I þan redoute my blame *and* agrisen as pouȝ

179 þer were byfallen a newe þing. q. d. non. ¶ For  
She fears not any accusation, as if it were a new thing. trowest þou þat philosophi be now alþerfirst assailed  
 in perils by folk of wicked[e] maneres. ¶ Hauē I not

stryuen wiþ ful greet strife in olde tyme byfore þe  
For before the age of Plato she contended against folly, age of my plato aȝeins þe foolhardines of foly *and*

184 eke þe same plato lyuyng. hys maistre socrates  
and by her help Socrates triumphed over an unjust death. deserued[e] victorie of vnryȝtful deef in my presence.  
 ¶ þe heritage of wyche socrates. þe heritage is to seyne

158 *sent*—isent  
 160 *þan*—thanne  
 161 *sodeyne*—sodeyn  
 163 *none oper*—non oother  
*sorowe*—sorwe  
 165 *knowe*—knowen  
 166 *myne*—myn  
*festned[e]*—fastnede  
 170 *fro*—from  
 170, 171 *art þou*—artow

172 *mad*—MS. made, C. mak-  
*fals[e]*—false [ed]  
 174 *parte*—parten  
 176 *nar[e]*—nere  
*sittynge*—sittinge  
 178 *þan*—thanne  
 179 *þing*—thing  
*q. d. non*—omitted  
 180 *trowest þou*—trowestow  
*alþerfirst*—alderfirst

181 *wicked[e]*—wikkede  
 182 *strife*—strif  
 183 *aȝeins*—ayenis  
*foolhardines*—foolhardi-  
 nease  
*foly*—folie  
 184 *eke*—ek  
 185 *deserued[e]*—desseruede  
 186 *wyche*—the which  
*seyne*—scyn

þe doctrine of þe whiche socrates in hys oppinioun of felicitye þat I clepe welfulnesse ¶ Whan þat þe people of epicuriens and stoyciens and many oþer enforceden hem to go rauische eueryche man for his part þat is 190 to seyne. þat to eueryche of hem wolde drawn to þe defence of his oppinioun þe wordes of socrates. ¶ þei as in partie of hir preye todrowen me crynge and debatynge þer azeins. and tornen and torenten my cloþes 194 þat I hadde wouen wiþ myn handes. and wiþ þe cloutes þat þei hadden arased oute of my cloþes. þei wenten away wenyng þat I hadde gon wiþ hem euery dele. In whiche epicuriens and stoyciens. for as 198 myche as þer semed[e] somme traces and steppes of myne habit. þe folye of men wenyng þo epicuriens and stoyciens my \*familers peruertede (.s. persequendo) somme þoruþ þe errour of þe wikked[e] or vnkun- 202 yng[e] multitude of hem. ¶ þis is to seyne for þei semeden philosophres: þei weren pursued to þe deep and slayn. ¶ So yif þou hast not knowen þe exilynge of anaxogore. ne þe empoysenyng of socrates. ne þe 206 tourmentz of zeno for þei [weren] straungers. ¶ 3it myztest þou haue knowen þe seneciens and þe Canyos and þe sorancis of wyche folk þe renoun is neyþer ouer oolde ne vnsolempne. ¶ þe whiche men no þing ellys 210 ne brouzt[e] hem to þe deep but oonly for þei weren enfourmed of my maneres. and semeden moste vnlyke to þe studies of wicked folk. ¶ And forþi þou auztest not to wondre þou; þat I in þe bitter see of þis lijf be 214

Of the inheritance of Socrates the rout of Epicureans and Stoics wanted to get a part.

Philosophy withstood them, whereupon they tore her robe, and, departing with the shreds,

imagined that they had got possession of her.

Thus, clothed with her spoils, they deceived many.

[\* fol. 5.]

Philosophy adduces examples of wise men, who had laboured under

difficulties on account of being her disciples.

188 *welfulnesse* — weleful-  
189 *oþer* — oothre [nesse]  
190 *go* — gon  
191 *eueryche* — euerich  
192 *seyne* — seyn  
193 *to* — omitted  
194 *eueryche* — euerich  
194 *tornen* — read coruen, C.  
195 *wouen* — MS. wonnen, C.  
196 *wouen*  
196 *arased* — arraced  
197 *gon* — MS. gone, C. gon  
198 *dele* — del  
199 *myche* — moche

199 *semed[e]* — semede  
and — or  
200 *myne* — myn  
200 *wenyng* — MS. wevyng, C.  
weninge  
202 *þoruþ* — thorw  
202 *wikked[e]* — wikkede  
202 *vnkunnyng[e]* — vnkun-  
203 *seyne* — seyn þat [ynge  
204 *semeden* — semede  
204 *pursued* — MS. pursuede,  
C. pursued  
205 *slayn* — MS. slayne, C.  
slayn  
207 [*weren*] — weeren

208 *myztest þou haue* —  
myhtestow han  
209 *sorancis* — sorans  
wyche — which  
is — nis  
210 *oolde* — MS. colde, C. old  
211 *brouzt[e]* — browhte  
212 *enfourmed* — MS. vn-  
fourmed, C. enformyd  
my — myne  
213 *vnlyke* — vnlyk  
213 *wikked folk* — wikkede  
213 *auztest* — owhtest [foolke  
214 *wondre* — wondren  
bitter — bittre



It is the aim of  
Philosophy to  
displease the  
wicked,

fordryuen wiþ tempestes blowyng aboute. in þe whiche  
tempeste þis is my most purpos þat is to seyn to dis-  
217 please to wikked[e] men. ¶ Of whiche schrews al be

who are more to  
be deepsed than  
dreaded, for they  
have no leader.

þe oost neuer so grete it is to dispyse. for it nis gouerned  
wiþ no leder of resoune. but it is rauysched only by  
220 flityng errorr folyly and lyztly. ¶ And if þei somtyme  
makyng an ost azeynest vs assaile vs as strengere. oure

If Philosophy is  
attacked by the  
wicked, she re-  
tires within her  
fortress,

leder draweþ to gedir hys rycchesse in to hys toure.  
and þei ben ententif aboute sarpulers or sachels vn-  
profitable forto taken. but we þat ben heyȝ abouen syker

225 fro al tumulte and wode noise. ben stored and enclosed  
in syche a palays. whider as þat chateryng or anoying  
folye ne may not attayne. ¶ We scorne swiche  
rauiners and honters of foulest[e] þinges.

leaving the enemy  
buy among the  
useless baggages,  
and laughing to  
scorn such hunt-  
ers of trifles.

## QUISQVIS COMPOSITO.

[The ferthe  
Metur.]

He who hath  
triumphed over  
fate, and remained  
insensible to the

232 changes of For-  
tune, shall not be  
moved by storms,  
nor by the fires  
of Vesuvius,  
nor by the fiercest  
thunderbolts.

Who so it be þat is clere of vertue sad and wel ordinat  
of lyuyng. þat haþ put vnderfote þe prowed[e]  
wierdes and lokip vpryzt vpon eyþer fortune. he may  
holde hys chiere vndiscomfited. ¶ þe rage ne þe manace  
of þe commoeuyng or chasyng vpwarde hete fro þe  
botme. ne schal not moeue þat man. ne þe vnstable  
mountaigne þat hyzt veseuus. þat wircheþ oute þoruȝ  
236 hys broken[e] chemineys smokyng fires. ¶ Ne þe wey  
of þonder lyzt þat is wont to smyte heyȝe toures ne  
schal not mouene þat man. ¶ Wherto þen wrecches  
drede ȝe tyrauntes þat ben wode and felownes wiþ-ouen  
ony strenkeþ. ¶ Hope after no þing ne drede nat. and

Fear not the  
tyrant's rage.

He who neither  
fears nor hopes

216 *displease*—displezen  
217 *wikked[e]*—wikkede  
*schrews*—shrewes  
218 *oost*—glossed *acies* in C.  
*grete*—grot  
219, 222 *leder*—ledere  
220 *flityng*—fleetyng  
*lyztly*—lythly  
*yȝ*—yif  
221 *azeynest*—ayenis  
222 *to*—rycchesse, to gy-  
dere hise ryccheses  
*toure*—towr  
224 *heyȝ*—heȝe

225 *al*—alle  
*ben*—omitted  
*stored*—warnestored  
226 *syche*—swich  
*þat*—omitted  
227 *scorne*—schorne  
228 *rauiners*—binges—  
rauyneres & henteres of  
fowleste thinges  
229 *clere*—cleer  
230 *lyuyng*—leuyng  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
*vnderfote*—vndir-foot  
*prowed[e]*—prowde

231 *may*—chiere—may his  
chiere holde  
232 *manace*—manesses  
233 *þe*—þe see  
235 *hyzt*—hihte  
*veseuus*—MS. vesenus  
*wircheþ*—writith  
236 *broken[e]*—brokene  
*smokyng*—smokynge  
237 *smyte*—smyten  
238 *Wherto þen*—wharto  
thaune  
239 *felownes*—ony—felo-  
nos withowte any

so schalt þou desarmen þe ire of þilke vnmyzty tyraunt. for anything dis-  
 ¶ But who so þat quakyng dredeþ or desireþ þing þat arms the tyrant.  
 nis not stable of his ryzt. þat man þat so doþ haþ cast He whos heart  
 away hys schelde *and* is remoeued fro hys place. *and* yields  
 enlaceþ hym in þe cheyne wiþ whiche he may be 245 his arms,  
 drawen. and forges his  
 own fetters.

## SENTIS NE INQUIT.

**F**elest þou *quod* sche þise þinges *and* entren þei ouzt [The verthe  
 in þi corage. ¶ Art þou like an asse to þe harpe. Philosophy seeks  
 Whi wepest þou whi spillest þou teres. ¶ Yif þou to know the  
 abidest after helpe of þi leche. þe byhoueþ discouere þi 250 malady of  
 wounde. ¶ Þo .I. þat hadde gadered strenkeþ in my Boethius com-  
 corage answered[e] *and* seide. *and* nedeþ it zitte *quod* plains of For-  
 .I. of rehersyng or of amonicioun. *and* scheweþ it not 253 tune's unrelenting  
 ynouz by hym self þe scharpnys of fortune þat wexeþ Is not she moved,  
 woode azeynes me. ¶ Ne moeueþ it nat þe to seen þe he asks, with the  
 face or þe manere of þis place (.i. prisoun.). ¶ Is þis aspect of his  
 þe librarie wyche þat þou haddest chosen for a ryzt 257 prison?  
 certeyne sege to þe in myne house. ¶ þere as þou His library, his  
 desputest of[te] wiþ me of þe sciences of þinges touch- habit, and his  
 ing diuinitee *and* touchyng mankynde. ¶ Was þan countenance are  
 myn habit swiche as it is now. was þan my face or 261 all changed.  
 my chere swiche as now. ¶ Whan I souzt[e] wiþ þe  
 secretys of nature. whan þou enfourmedest my maners  
*and* þe resoun of al my lijf. to þe ensauple of þe ordre 264  
 of heuene. ¶ Is nat þis þe gerdoun þat I refere to þe Is this, he asks,  
 to whom I haue be obeisaunt. ¶ Certis þou enfour- the reward of his  
 medist by þe moupe of plato þis sentence. þat is to fidelity?  
 seyne þat commune þinges or comunabletes weren Plato (de Rep. v.)  
 says that those  
 Commonwealths

241 *schalt þou desarmen*—  
 shaltow deseruien  
 243 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
*haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hath  
*cast*—MS. caste, C. cast  
 244 *schelde*—sheld  
*remoeued fro*—remwed  
 from  
 245 *whiche*—the which  
*be*—ben  
 247 *Felest þou*—Felistow  
*ouzt*—awht

248 *art þou*—artow  
 249 *wepest þou*—wepistow  
*spillest þou*—spillestow  
 252 *answered[e]*—answer-  
 ede  
 255 *woode*—wood  
 257 *wyche*—which  
 258 *myne house þere*—myn  
 hows ther  
 259 *desputest of[te]*—des-  
 putedest ofte  
 260 *þan*—thanne

261 *it and þan*—both omitted  
 261, 262 *swiche*—swich  
 262 *souzt[e]*—sowhte  
 263 *secretys*—secretz  
*my*—MS. me, C. my  
 264 *at*—alle  
 265 *gerdoun*—gerdouns  
 266 *enfourmedist*—conform-  
 edest  
 267 *moupe*—mowht  
 268 *comunabletes*—comuna-  
 litees

are most happy  
that are governed  
by philosophers,  
or by those who  
study to be so.  
[\* fol. 5 b.]

The same Plato  
urged philoso-  
phers to take  
upon them the  
management of  
public affairs.

lest it should fall  
into the hands of  
unprincipled  
citizens.

Boethius declares  
that he desired to  
put in practice  
(in the manage-  
ment of public  
affairs) what he  
had learnt in his  
retirement.

He sought to do  
good to all, but  
became involved  
in discord with  
the wicked.

Consciousness of  
integrity made  
him despise the  
anger of the most  
powerful.

He opposed  
Conigastus,  
and put a stop to  
the doings of  
Triguilla.

He put his au-

blysfyl yif þei þat hadn studied al fully to wisdom  
gouerneden pilke þinges. or ellys yif it so by-felle þat  
þe gouernours \*of communalites studieden in grete wis-

272 domes. ¶ þou saidest eke by þe mouþe of þe same

plato þat it was a necessarie cause wyse men to taken  
and desire þe gouernaunce of comune þinges. for þat þe  
gouernementes of comune citees y-left in þe hondes of

276 felonous tourmentours Citizenis ne scholde not brynge

inne pestilence and destruccioun to goode folk. ¶ And  
þerfore I folowyng pilk auctoritee (s. platonis). desiryng

279 to put[te] furþe in execusioun and in acte of comune

administracioun þo þinges þat .I. hadde lerned of þe  
among my secre restyng whiles. ¶ þou and god þat  
put[te] þee in þe þouztis of wise folk ben knowen wip  
me þat no þing brouȝt[e] me to maistrie or dignite: but

284 þe comune studie of al goodenes. ¶ And þer-of comeþ

it þat by-twixen wikked folk and me han ben greuouse  
discordes. þat ne myȝten not be releseþ by prayeres.

¶ For þis libertee haþ fredom of conscience þat þe wrappe

288 of more myȝty folk haþ alwey ben despised of me for

saluacioun of ryȝt. ¶ How ofte haue .I. resisted and  
wipstonde pilk man þat hyȝt[e] conigaste þat made

alwey assautes aȝeins þe propre fortunes of poure feble

292 folke. ¶ How ofte haue .I. ȝitte put of. or cast out

hym trigwille prouost of þe kynges hous boþe of þe  
wronges þat he hadde bygon[ne] to done and eke fully

performed. ¶ How ofte haue I couered and defended

296 by þe auctorite of me put aȝeins perils. þat is to seine put

myne auctorite in peril for þe wreched pore folke. þat

270 *by-felle*—byfille  
271 *in grete wisdomes*—to  
geten wysdom  
272 *eke*—ek  
275 *comune*—omitted  
*y-left*—MS. ylefte, C. yleft  
276 *Citizenis*—citesenes  
*brynge inne*—bryngen in  
278 *þerfore*—therfor  
pilk—thilke  
*desiryng*—desired  
279 *put[te] furþe*—putten

forth  
280 *þo*—thilke  
282 *put[te]*—putte  
283 *brouȝt[e]*—ne browhte  
284 *þe*—omitted  
*al goodenes*—alle good-  
nesse  
*comeþ*—comth  
287, 288 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
289 *saluacioun*—sauacioun  
290 *pilk*—thilke  
*hyȝt[e]*—hyhte

290 *conigaste*—MS. coniu-  
gaste  
292 *ofte*—ofte ek  
*ȝitte*—omitted  
294 *bygon[ne]*—bygunne  
*done*—don  
295 *couered*—MS. couerede,  
C. couered  
296 *put*—MS. putte, C. put  
*seine*—seyn  
297 *myne*—myn

þe couetise of straungeres vnpunysched *tourmentid* alwey thority in peril  
for the defence of  
poor folk.  
wip myseses *and* greuauces oute of noumbre. ¶ Neuer  
man drow me 3itte fro ryzt to wrong. When I say þe  
fortunes *and* þe rychesse of þe people of þe *prouinces* I never deviated,  
he says, from the  
path of justice.  
ben harmed eyþer by priue raynes or by comune 302  
tributis or cariages. as sory was I as þei þat suffred[e] I felt for those  
that were wrong-  
fully oppressed.  
þe harme. *Glosa.* ¶ Whan þat theodoric þe kyng of  
gothes in a dere 3ere hadde hys gerneris ful of corne  
*and* comaundede þat no man ne schold[e] bie no corne 306  
til his corne were solde *and* þat at a dere greuous pris.  
¶ But I withstod þat ordinaunce *and* ouer-com it  
knowyng al þis þe kyng hym self. ¶ Coempcioun þat  
is to seyn comune achat or bying to-gidere þat were 310  
establisshed vpon poeple by swiche a manere imposicioun  
as who so bouzt[e] a busshel corn he most[e] 3eue þe  
kyng þe fite part. *Textus.* ¶ Whan it was in þe 313  
soure hungry tyme þere was establisshed or cried greuous  
*and* inplitable coempcioun þat men seyn wel it schulde I opposed success-  
fully Coempton  
in Campania.  
greetly *tourmentyn and* endamagen al þe prouince of 316  
compaigne I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie  
for comune profit. ¶ And þe kyng knowyng of it I  
ouercom it so þat þe coempcioun ne was not axed ne I saved Paulinus  
out of the hands  
of the hounds of  
the palace  
(Palatini canes).  
took effect. ¶ Paulyn a counseiller of Rome þe rychesse  
of þe whyche paulyn þe houndys of þe palays. þat is to 321  
seyn þe officeres wolde han deuoured by hope *and*  
couetise. . ¶ 3it drow I hym out of þe Iowes .s. faucibus  
of hem þat gapeden. ¶ And for as myche as þe peyne 324  
of þe accusacioun aiuged byforn ne scholde not sodeynly I defended  
Albinus against  
Cyprian.  
henten ne punischen wrongfully Albyn a counseiller of

298 *vnpunysched*—vnpunys-  
sed  
299 *myseses*—myseyses  
300 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.  
weth drowh  
301 *3itte*—yit  
*wrong*—wronge  
301 *rychesse*—richesses  
þe (2)—omitted  
302 *harmed eyþer*—harmyd  
or amenused owther  
303 *tributis*—tributis  
*suffred[e]*—suffreden

304 *harme*—harm  
305 *3ere*—yer  
305 *hys*—hise  
305, 306, 307 *corne*—corn  
306 *schold[e]* *bie*—sholde  
byen  
308 *But I withstod*—Boece  
withstood. (MS. with-  
stode)  
*com*—MS. come, C. com  
311 *swiche*—swich  
312 *bouzt[e]*—bowhte  
*busshel*—bossel

312 *most[e]* *3eue*—moste yeue  
315 *inplitable*—vnplitable  
*seyn*—sayen  
319 *ouercom*—MS. ouer-  
come, C. ouer com  
320 *counseiller*—consoler  
*rychesse*—richesses  
321 *whyche*—which  
322 *wolde*—wolden  
323 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.  
drowh  
324 *myche*—moche  
326 *punischen*—punisse

- Rome. I put[te] me azenis þe hates *and* indignaciouns  
 328 of þe accusour Ciprian. ¶ Is it not þan ynought yseyn  
 þat I haue purchased greet[e] discordes azeins my self.  
 but I aughte be more asseured azenis alle oþer folk þat  
 for þe loue of ryztwysnesse .I. ne reserued[e] neuer no  
 332 þing to my self to hem ward of þe kynges halle .s. officers.  
 by þe whiche I were þe more syker. ¶ But þoruþ þe  
 same accusours accusyng I am condempned. ¶ Of  
 þe noubre of whiche accusours one basilus þat som-  
 tyme was chased out of þe kynges seruice. is now com-  
 337 pelled in accusyng of my name for nede of foreine  
 moneye. ¶ Also opilion *and* Gaudencius han accused  
 me. al be it so þat þe Iustice regal hadde sumtyme demed  
 340 hem boþe to go in to exil. for her treccheries *and* fraudes  
 wiþ-outen noubre. ¶ To whiche iugement þei wolde  
 not obeie. but defended[e] hem by sykernesse of holy  
 houses. \*þat is to seyne fledden in to seyntuaries. *and*  
 whan þis was aperceiued to þe kyng. he comaunded[e]  
 but þat þei voided[e] þe citee of Rauenne by certeyne  
 day assigned þat men scholde merken hem on þe for-  
 347 heued wiþ an hoke of iren *and* chasen hem out of toun.  
 ¶ Now what þing semeþ þe myzt[e] be lykned to þis  
 cruelte. For certys pilk same day was receyued þe ac-  
 cusyng of my name by pilk[e] same accusours. ¶ What  
 may be seid herto. haþ my studie *and* my konnyng  
 352 deserued þus. or ellys þe forseide dampnacioun of me.  
 made þat hem ryztful accusours or no (q.d. non).  
 ¶ Was not fortune asshamed of þis. [Certes alle hadde  
 nat fortune ben asshamyd] þat innocence was accused.  
 3it auzt[e] sche haue had schame of þe filþe of myn ac-

For the love of  
Justice I forfeited  
all favour at  
Court.

Boethius makes  
mention of his  
accusers, Basilus,  
Opilio, Gauden-  
tius,

[\* fol. 6.]

men who had  
been commanded  
to leave the city  
on account of  
their many  
crimes.

But, on the day  
this sentence was  
to be executed,  
they accused him,  
and their testi-  
mony against  
him was accepted.

Fortune, if not  
ashamed at this,  
might at least  
blush for the  
baseness of the  
accusers.

327 put[te]—putte  
328 yseyn—MS. yseyne  
329 greet[e]—grote  
330 aughte be—owhte be the  
oþer—oother  
333 by þe whiche—by which  
þoruþ be—thorw tho  
335 whiche—the whiche  
one—oon  
somtyme—whilom  
339 sumtyme—whilon  
340 go—gon  
her—hir

341 wiþ-outen—withowte  
wolde not—nolden nat  
342 defended[e]—defendedyn  
by—by the  
343 seyne—seyn  
seyntuaries—sentyarye  
344 was—omitted  
comaunded[e]—comaun-  
dede  
345 voided[e]—voidede  
certeyne—certeyn  
346 men—me  
merken—marke

347 hoke of iren—hoot yren  
348 be—omitted  
myzt[e] be—myhte ben  
349 pilk—thilke  
350 pilk[e]—thilke  
351 be—ben  
seid—MS. seide, C. seyð  
haþ—MS. hape  
354, 355 [Certes—assa-  
myd]—from C.  
356 auzt[e]—owte  
haue had—han had, MS.  
hadde

cusours. ¶ But axest þou in somme of what gilt .I. 357

am accused. men seyne þat I wolde sauē þe compaignie of þe senatours. ¶ And desirest þou to here in what manere .I. am accused þat I scholde han distourbed þe accusour to beren lettres. by whiche he scholde han maked þe senatours guilty azeins þe kynges 362

Boethius says he is accused of trying to save the Senate, and of having embarrassed an informer against the Senate.

Real maieste. ¶ O meistresse what demest þou of þis. schal .I. forsake þis blame þat I ne be no schame to þe (q. d. non). ¶ Certis .I. haue wold it. þat is to 365

seyne þe sauacioun of þe senat. ne I schal neuer leten to wilne it. and þat I confesse and am a-knowe. but þe entent of þe accusour to be destourbed schal cese.

It is true that he tried to save the Senate, for he has and will have its best interests always at heart.

¶ For schal I clepe it a felonie þan or a synne þat I 369

haue desired þe sauacioun of þe ordre of þe senat. and certys þit hadde þilk same senat don by me þoruȝ her decretȝ and hire iugementys as þouȝ it were a synne or a felonie þat is to seyne to wilne þe sauacioun of 373

hem (.s. senatus). ¶ But folye þat lieth alwey to hym self may not chaunge þe merit of þinges. ¶ Ne .I.

(Folly cannot change the merit of things.

trowe not by þe iugement of socrates þat it were leue- 376

ful to me to hide þe soþe. ne assent[e] to lesynges.

According to Socrates' judgment it is not lawful to hide the truth nor assent to a falsehood.)

¶ But certys how so euer it be of þis I put[te] it to gessen

or preisen to þe iugement of þe and of wise folk. ¶ Of

whiche þing al þe ordinaunce and þe soþe for as moche 380

as folk þat ben to comen aftir oure dayes schollen

knownen it. ¶ I haue put it in scripture and remem-

Boethius determines to transmit an account of his prosecution to posterity.

braunce. for touching þe lettres falsly maked. by

whiche lettres I am accused to han hooped þe fredom of

Rome. What apperteneþ me to speken þer-of. Of 385

whiche lettres þe fraude hadde ben schewed apertly if

357 *axest þou*—axestow  
358 *seyne*—seyne  
*sauen*—sauē  
359 *desirest þou*—desires  
thow  
*here*—hereen  
362 *maked*—MS. maken, C.  
makyd  
363 *demest þou*—demestow  
365 *wold*—MS. wolde, C.

wold  
366 *seyne*—seyne  
367 *þat*—omitted  
*am*—I am  
368 *þe*—ben  
369 *it*—it thanne  
*þan*—omitted  
371 *þilk*—þilke  
372 *her*—hir  
*hire*—hir

373 *þouȝ*—thogh  
373 *or*—and  
*seyne*—seyne  
374 *lieth*—MS. lieþe, C. lieth  
377 *assent[e]*—assente  
381 *schollen*—shellen  
382 *and*—and in  
385 *speken*—speke  
*of*—lettres—C. omits  
386 *if*—yif

Boethius says  
that he could  
have defeated his  
accusers had he  
been allowed the  
use of their con-  
fessions.

I hadde had libertee forto han vsed *and* ben at þe  
confessioun of myn accusours. ¶ þe whiche þing in  
alle nedys haþ grete strenkeþ. ¶ For what oþer freedom  
may men hopen. Certys I wolde þat some oþer freedom

391 myzt[e] be hoped. ¶ I wolde þan haue answered by  
þe wordes of a man þat hyzt[e] Canius. for whan he was  
accused by Gayus Cesar Germeins son þat he (canius)  
was knowyng *and* consentyng of a coniuracioun maked  
aþeins hym (.s. Gaius). ¶ þis Canius answered[e]

But there is now  
no remains of  
liberty to be  
hoped for.

396 þus. ¶ Yif I had[de] wist it þou haddest not wist  
it. In whiche þing sorwe haþ not so dulled my witte  
þat I pleyne .only þat schrewed[e] folk apparailen  
folies aþeins vertues. ¶ But I wondre gretly how þat

It is not strange  
that the wicked  
should conspire  
against virtue.

400 þei may performe þinges þat þei had[de] hoped forto  
done. For why. to wylne schrewednesse þat comeþ  
paraurenture of oure defaute. ¶ But it is lyke to a  
monstre *and* a meruaille. ¶ How þat in þe present

The will to do ill  
proceeds from the  
defects of human  
nature.

404 syzt of god may ben acheued *and* performed swiche  
þinges. as euery felonous man haþ conceyued in hys  
þouzt aþeins innocent. ¶ For whiche þing oon of þi  
familers not vnskilfully axed þus. ¶ 3if god is. whennes  
comen wikked[e] þinges. *and* yif god ne is whennes

It is a marvel  
how such evil  
acts can be done  
under the eye of  
an Omniscient  
God.

409 comen goode þinges. but al hadde it ben leueful þat  
felonous folk þat now desiren þe bloode *and* þe deep of  
alle goode men. *and* eke of al þe senat han wilned to  
gone destroien me. whom þei han seyn alwey batailen

If there be a God,  
whence proceeds  
evil? If there is  
none, whence  
arises good?

413 *and* defenden goode men *and* eke al þe senat. 3it  
hadde I not desserued of þe fadres. þat is to seyne of  
þe senatours þat þei scholde wilne my destruccioun.

387 *had*—MS. hade, C. had  
388 *myn*—myne  
389 *haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hath  
390 *grete*—gret  
391 *some*—som  
391 *myzt[e]* *be*—myhte ben  
392 *þan haue*—iþanne han  
392 *hyzt[e]*—hyhte  
394 *maked*—ymakod  
395 *answered[e]*—answerede  
396 *had[de]*—hadde

397 *whiche*—which  
397 *sorwe*—sorrw  
397 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
397 *witte*—wit  
398 *schrewed[e]*—shrewede  
399 *folies*—felonics  
399 *vertues*—vertu  
400 *had[de]*—han  
401 *done*—don  
401 *comeþ*—comth  
402 *lyke to a*—lyk a  
404 *syzt*—syhte

405 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
406 *innocent*—innocent;  
406 *whiche*—which  
408 *wikked[e]*—wykkede  
410 *bloode*—blod  
411 *eke*—ek  
412 *gone*—gon *and*  
412 *seyn*—soyen  
413 *eke*—ek  
414 *seyne*—seyn  
415 *scholde*—sholden

¶ pou remembreth wele as I gesse þat whan I wolde don or \*seyen any þing. þou þi self alwey present reweledest me. ¶ At þe citee of verone whan þat þe kyng gredy of comune slaughtre. caste hym to trans-  
 porten vpon al þe ordre of þe senat. þe gilt of his real 420  
 maieste of þe whiche gilt þat albyn was accused. wiþ  
 how grete sykernesse of peril to me defended[e] I al 422  
 þe senat. ¶ þou wost wel þat I seide soþe. ne I He spake only  
 auaunted[e] me neuer in preysyng of my self. ¶ For not boast.  
 alwey when any wyzt resceiueþ preciose renoun in (Boasting lessens  
 auauntyng hym self of hys werkes: he amenusiþ þe the pleasure of a  
 secre of hys conscience. ¶ But now þou mayst wel 427 self approving  
 seen to what ende I am comen for myne innocence. conscience.)  
 I receiue peyne of fals felonie in gerdoun of verray But as the reward  
 vertue. ¶ And what open confessioun of felonie of his innocence  
 had[de] euer iugis so accordaunt in cruelte. þat is to he is made to  
 seyne as myne accusyng hap. ¶ þat oper error of suffer the punish-  
 mans witte or ellysacondicioun of fortune þat is vncerteine ment due to the  
 to al mortal folk ne submytted[e] summe of hem. þat is blackest crime.  
 to seyne þat it ne cheyned[e] summe iuge to han pitee 432  
 or compassioun. ¶ For al þou; I had[de] ben accused Had he been  
 þat I wolde brenne holy houses. and strangle prestys accused of a de-  
 wiþ wicked swerde. ¶ or þat .I. had[de] grayped deep sign to burn  
 to alle goode men algatis þe sentence scholde han temples, ma-  
 punysched me present confessed or conuict. ¶ But 440 sacre priests, he  
 now I am remewed fro þe Citee of rome almost fyue would have been  
 hundred þousand pas. I am wiþ outen defence dampned allowed to con-  
 to proscriptioun and to þe deep. for þe studie and front his accusers.  
 bountees þat I haue done to þe senat. ¶ But o wel ben 444  
 þei worþi of mercye (as who seiþ nay.) þer myzt[e] neuer

416 wele—wel  
 417 don—MS. done, C. doon  
 418 seyn—seyen  
 419 þe (1)—omitted  
 419 slaughtre—slawhtre  
 420 transporten vpon—  
 transpor vp  
 422 grete—gret  
 422 defended[e]—deffendede  
 423 seide soþe—seye soth  
 424 auaunted[e]—auauntede

425 when—whan  
 425 preciose—presious  
 429 in—for  
 430 vertue—vertu  
 431 had[de]—hadde  
 432 seyne—seyen  
 432 myne—myn  
 432 hap—MS. hape  
 433 witte—wit  
 433 vncerteine—vncerteyn  
 434 al—alle

434 submytted[e]—submit-  
 435 seyne—seyen  
 435 cheyned[e]—enclinedo  
 436 had[de]—hadde  
 438 wicked—wykkede  
 438 had[de]—hadde  
 441 almost—almost  
 442 þousand—MS. þousas  
 442 wiþ outen—withowte  
 444 done—doon  
 445 myzt[e]—myhte



- 446 *jit non of hem ben conuicte. Of swiche a blame as*  
 myn is of swiche *trespas* myn *accusours* seyen ful wel  
 þe dignitee. þe wiche dignite for þei wolde derken it  
 wip medelyng of some felonye. þei beren me on honde  
 450 *and* lieden. þat I hadde polute *and* defouled my con-  
 science wip sacrelege. for couetise of dignite. ¶ And  
 certys þou þi self þat art plaunted in me chacedest oute  
 þe sege of my corage al couetise of mortal þinges. ne  
 454 sacrelege ne had[de] no leue to han a place in me byforne  
 pine eyen. ¶ For þou drouppedest euery day in myn  
 eeres *and* in my pouzt þilk comaundement of pictogoras.  
 þat is to seyne men schal seruen to god. *and* not to  
 458 goddesses. ¶ Ne it was no couenaunt ne no nede to  
 taken helpe of þe foulest spirites. ¶ I þat þou hast  
 ordeyned or set in syche excellence þat [þou] makedest  
 461 me lyke to god. and ouer þis þe ryzt clene secre  
 chaumbre of myn house. þat is to seye my wijf *and* þe  
 compaignie of myn honeste frendis. *and* my wyues  
 fadir as wel holy as worþi to ben reuerenced þoruȝ  
 465 hys owen dedis. defenden me of al suspeccioun of syche  
 blame. ¶ But o malice. ¶ For þei þat accusen me  
 taken of þe philosophie feiþe of so grete blame. ¶ For  
 þei trowen þat .I. haue had affinite to malyfice or en-  
 chauntementȝ by cause þat I am replenished *and* ful-  
 470 filled wip þi techynges. *and* enformed of þi maners.  
 ¶ And þus it sufficeþ not only þat þi reuerence ne auayle  
 me not. but ȝif þat þou of þi fre wille raper be blemissid  
 wip myne offensioun. ¶ But certys to þe harmes þat I  
 474 haue þere bytydeþ ȝit þis encrece of harme. þat þe

Boethius says  
that his enemies  
accused him of  
sorcery.

He affirms that  
he has always  
followed the  
golden maxim of  
Pythagoras,—  
εἰς θεὸν ὁρᾷ.

His family and  
friends could clear  
him from all sus-  
picion of the  
crime of sorcery.

Because he has  
given himself up  
to Philosophy,  
his enemies accuse  
him of using un-  
lawful arts.

446 *ben*—be  
*swiche*—swich  
 447 *myn* (both)—myne  
*swiche*—whiche  
*seyen*—saien  
 448 *wolde*—wolden  
 449 *some*—som  
*beren*—baren  
*on honde*—an hand  
 450 *polute*—polut  
 451 *sacrelege*—C. has sor-  
 cerie as a gloss to sacri-  
 lege  
 453 *al*—alle

454 *had[de]*—hadde  
*byforne*—byforn  
 455 *drouppedest*—dropped-  
 est  
*myn*—myne  
 456 *þilk*—thilke  
 457 *seyne*—seyn  
*seruen*—serue  
*god*—godde  
 458 *helpe*—help  
*spirites*—spirite  
 460 *set*—M.S. sette, C. set  
*syche*—swiche  
 [þou]—thow

461 *lyke*—lyk  
 462 *house*—hows  
*seye*—seyn  
 463 *myn*—my  
 465 *owen*—owne  
*of al*—from alle  
*syche*—swich  
 467 *philosophie*—philosophre  
*feiþe*—feyth  
*grete*—gret  
 468 *had*—M.S. hadde, C. had  
 473 *myne*—myn  
 474 *þere*—ther  
*harme*—harm

gessinge *and* þe iugement of myche folk ne loken no 475  
 þing to þe[de]sertys of þinges but only to þe auenture  
 of fortune. ¶ And iugen þat only swiche þinges ben  
 purueied of god. whiche þat temporel welefulnesse  
 commendip. *Glosa.* ¶ As þus þat yif a wyzt haue  
 prosperite. he is a good man *and* worþi. to haue þat 480  
 prosperite. and who so haþ aduersite he is a wikked  
 man. *and* god haþ forsake hym. *and* he is worþi to  
 haue þat aduersite. ¶ þis is þe opinioun of somme  
 folke. \**and* þer of comeþ þat good gessyng. ¶ Fyrste of  
 al þing forsakeþ wrecches certys it greueþ me to þink[e] 485  
 ryȝt now þe dyuerse sentences þat þe poeple seiþ of  
 me. ¶ And þus moche I seye þat þe laste charge of 487  
 contrarious fortune is þis. † þat whan þat ony blame is  
 laid vpon a caytif. men wenen þat he haþ deserued þat  
 he suffreþ. ¶ And I þat am put away from goode men  
*and* despoiled from dignitees *and* defoulid of my name  
 by gessyng haue suffred torment for my goode dedis. 492  
 ¶ Certys me semeþ þat I se þe felonys couines of  
 wikked men abunden in ioie *and* in gladnes. ¶ And  
 I se þat euery lorel shapiþ hym to fynde oute newe  
 fraudes forto accusen goode folke. and I se þat goode 496  
 men ben ouerprowen for drede of my peril. ¶ *and*  
 euery luxurious tourmentour dar don alle felonie vn-  
 punissed *and* ben excited perto by ȝiftes. and innocentȝ 499  
 ne ben not oonly despoiled of sykernesse but of de-  
 fence *and* þefore me list to crien to god in þis manere.

Most people  
 imagine that that  
 only should be  
 judged to be un-  
 dertaken with  
 prudent foresight  
 which is crowned  
 with success.

The unfortunate  
 lose the good  
 opinion of the  
 world.

[Text begins  
 again.]

(† fol. 7.)

Boethius laments  
 the loss of his  
 dignities and  
 reputation.

The wicked, he  
 says, sin with  
 impunity.

while the inno-  
 cent are deprived  
 of security, pro-  
 tection, and  
 defence.

## O STELLIFERI CONDITOR ORBIS.

O þou maker of þe whele þat bereþ þe sterres. whiche [The fiftie metur.]  
 þat art fastned to þi perdurable chayere. *and* Author of the  
 starry sky, Thou,

475 *myche*—moche  
 476 þe[de]sertys—the desertȝ  
 479 *Glosa*—glose  
 480 *good*—MS. goode, C.  
     good  
     haue—han  
 481 *so*—omitted in C.  
 481, 482 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
 483 *haue*—han

484 *Fyrste*—fyrst  
 485 *al*—alle  
 486 *þink[e]*—thinke  
 488 *ony*—any  
 489 *laide*—MS. laide, C. leyð  
 490 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
 490 *put*—MS. putte, C. put  
 491 *from*—of  
 494 *abunden*—habownden

494 *gladnes*—gladnesse  
 495 *oule*—owt  
 496 *accusen*—accuse  
 497 *ben*—beth  
 501 *manere*—wise  
 502 *whele*—whiel  
 502 *whiche*—which  
 503 *fastned*—ȝfastned  
     *chayere*—chayer

seated on high,  
turnest the  
spheres, and  
imposest laws  
upon the stars  
and planets.

turnest þe heuene wiþ a rauyssyng sweighe *and* con-  
streineþ þe sterres to suffren þi lawe. ¶ So þat þe  
mone somtyme schynyng wiþ hir ful hornes metyng

507 wiþ alle þe bemes of þe sonne. ¶ Hir proper hideþ þe

The sun obscures  
the lesser lights,  
and quenches  
even the moon's  
light.

sterres þat ben lasse. *and* somtyme whan þe mone  
pale wiþ hir derke hornes approcheþ þe sonne. leesith  
hir lyztes. ¶ And þat þe euesterre esperus whiche

511 þat in þe first[e] tyme of þe nyzt bryngeþ furþe hir  
colde arysynges comeþ eft aþeynes hir vsed cours. *and*

Thou raisest  
Hesperus to usher  
in the shades of  
night, and again  
causest him to be  
the harbinger of  
day, whence his  
name Lucifer.

is pale by þe morwe at þe rysyng of þe sonne. *and* is  
þan cleped lucifer. ¶ þou restreineþ þe day by shorter  
dwellyng in þe tyme of colde wynter þat makeþ þe

516 leues to falle. ¶ þou diuident þe swifte tides of þe  
nyzt when þe hote somer is comen. ¶ þi myzt at-

Thou controullest  
the changing  
seasons of the  
year.

tempre[þ] þo variaunt; sesons of þe ȝere. so þat  
ȝepherus þe deboneire wynde bringeþ aȝein in þe first[e]

520 somer sesoun þe leues þat þe wynde þat hyzt[e] boreas  
haþ reft away in autumpne. þat is to seyne in þe laste  
eende of somer. *and* þe sedes þat þe sterre þat hyzt arc-

523 turus saw ben waxen hey[e] cornes whan þe sterre  
sirius eschaufep hym. ¶ þere nis no þing vnbounde  
from hys olde lawe ne foreleteþ hym of hys propre estat.

All nature is  
bound by thy  
eternal law.

526 ¶ O þou gouernour gouernyng alle þinges by certeyne

Why, then, leavest  
thou man's ac-  
tions uncon-  
trolled?

ende. why refuseþ þou oonly to gouerne þe werkes of  
men by dewe manere. ¶ Whi suffrest þou þat slid-  
yng fortune turneþ to grete vtter chaungynges of þinges.

Why should  
fickle fortune be  
allowed to work  
such mighty  
changes in the  
world?

so þat anoious peyne þat scholde duelly punisshe fel-  
ouns punissit; innocent; ¶ And folk of wikked[e]

532 maneres sitten in heiȝe chaiers. *and* anoienge folk

504 *sweighe*—sweyh  
*constreineþ*, MS. con-  
treineþ, C. constreynest  
506 *hir*—here  
508 *lasse*—lesse  
510 *esperus whiche*—hes-  
perus which  
511 *first[e]*—fyrste  
*furþe*—forth  
512 *eft*—est  
514 *restreineþ*—MS. re-  
streineþ  
516 *to*—omitted  
518 *attempre[þ]*—þo—atemp-

reth the  
518 *sesons*—sesoun  
*ȝere*—ȝer  
519 *wynde bringeþ*—wynd  
brengeth  
520 *wynde*—wynd  
*hyzt[e]*—hihte  
521 *reft*—MS. reffe, C. reft  
*seyne*—seyn  
522 *hyzt*—hihte  
*arcturus*—MS. ariturus  
523 *saw*—MS. sawep, C.  
sawh  
*hey[e]*—hyye

524 *hym*—hem  
*þere*—ther  
*þing*—thinge  
525 *from*—fram  
*foreleteþ hym of*—forelest-  
heth þe werke of  
527 *refuseþ þou*—refowa-  
estow  
529 *to*—þinges—so grete  
entrechaunginges of  
thynges  
531 *punissit;—punyshe*  
*wikked[e]*—wykkede  
532 *heiȝe*—heeru

treden *and* pat vnryȝtfully in þe nekkes of holy men. 533

¶ And vertue clere *and* schynyng naturely is hid in dirke dirkenesses. *and* þe ryȝtful man berip þe blame *and* þe peyne of þe felowne. ¶ Ne þe forsweryng ne 536

The wicked are prosperous, while the righteous are in adversity.

þe fraude couered *and* kembd wip a fals colour ne a-noyep not to schrewes. ¶ þe whiche schrewes whan hem lyst to vsen her strengþe þei reioisen hem to putten vndir hem þe souerayne kynges. whiche pat 540

poeple wip[uten] noumbre dreden. ¶ O þou what so euer þou be þat knyttes[t] alle bondes of þinges loke on þise wrecched[e] erþes. we men þat ben nat a foule party but a faire party of so grete a werke we 544

O thou that bindest the disagreeing elements, look upon this wretched earth,

ben turmentid in þe see of fortune. ¶ þou gouernour

wipdraw *and* restreyn þe rauyssinge flodes *and* fastne *and* forme þise erþes stable wip pilke [bonde] wip whiche þou gouernest þe heuene þat is so large. 544

and, as thou dost govern the spacious heavens, so let the earth be firmly bound.

## HIC UBI CONTINUATO DOLORE.

Whan I hadde wip a continuel sorwe sobbed or broken out þise þinges sche wip hir chere peisible *and* no þing amoeued. wip my compleyntes seide þus. 551

[The fythe prose.] Philosophy consoles Boethius.

whan I say þe quod sche sorweful *and* wepyng I wist[e] on-one þat þou were a wrecche *and* exiled. but I wist[e] neuer how fer þine exile was: ȝif þi tale ne hadde schewed it to me. but certys al be þou fer fro þi 555

contre. þou nart \* nat put out of it. but þou hast [fol. 7 b.]

fayled of þi weye *and* gon amys. ¶ *and* yif þou hast

leuer forto wene þan þou be put out of þi contre. þan hast þou put oute þi self raper þen ony oper wyȝt hap. She speaks to him of his country.

¶ For no wyȝt but þi self ne myȝt[e] neuer haue don 560

533 in—oon  
534 *and*—omitted  
536 Ne þe forsweryng—Ne forswerynge  
537 kembd—MS. kembde, C. kembd  
541 wip[uten]—withhowtyn  
542 knyttes[t]—knytttest  
543 wrecched[e]—wrecchede  
544 a (2)—omitted

545 þe—this  
546 wipdraw—MS. wipdrawe, C. withdraw  
þe—thei  
547 forme—ferme  
[bonde]—from C.  
wip—by  
550 broken—borken  
552 wist[e]—wyste  
553 on-one—anon  
554 wist[e]—wyste

554 fer—ferre  
555 ne hadde—nadde  
557 gon—MS. gone, C. gon  
558 leuer—leuere  
558, 559 put—MS. putte, C. put  
559 hap—MS. hape  
560 myȝt[e]—myhte  
haue—han  
don—MS. done, C. don

- 561 þat to þe. ¶ For ȝif þou remembre of what contre þou  
 She reminds him art born. it nis not gouerned by emperoures. ne by  
 that he is a citi-zen of a country not governed by a  
 giddy multitude, but eis goipavos  
 ἐστὶν εἰς  
 βασιλείᾳ.  
 566 þe dwellyng of hys Citezenis. and not forto putte hem  
 in exile. Of þe whiche lorde it is a souerayne fredom  
 to be gouerned by þe bridel of hym and obeie to his  
 iustice. ¶ Hast þou forȝeten þilke ryȝt olde lawe of þi  
 570 Citee. in þe whiche Citee it is ordeyned and establißed  
 þat what wyȝt þat haþ leuer founden þer inne hys sete  
 or hys house. þen ellys where: he may not be exiled  
 573 by no ryȝt fro þat place. ¶ For who so þat is contened  
 in-wip þe paleis [and the clos] of þilke Citee. þer nis  
 no drede þat he may deserue to ben exiled. ¶ But  
 who þat letteþ þe wille forto enhabit[e] þere. he for-  
 leteþ also to deserue to ben Citeȝein of þilke Citee.  
 577 ¶ So þat I seye þat þe face of þis place ne amoeueþ me  
 Philosophy says she is moved  
 more by the looks  
 of Boethius than  
 by his gloomy  
 prison.  
 nat so myche as þine owen face. Ne .I. ne axe not  
 rapen þe walles of þi librarie apparaillid and wrouȝt  
 wip yvory and wip glas þan after þe sete of þi þouȝt.  
 582 In whiche I putte nat somtyme bookes. but .I. putte  
 Books are to be  
 valued on account  
 of the thoughts  
 they contain.  
 þat þat makeþ bookes worpi of pris or precious þat is  
 to sein þe sentence of my books. ¶ And certainly of  
 585 þi decertes by-stowed in commune good. þou hast seid  
 soþe but after þe multitude of þi goode dedys. þou hast  
 seid fewe. and of þe vn honestee or falsnesse of þinges  
 588 þat ben opposed aȝeins þe. þou hast remembred þinges  
 þat ben knowe to alle folk. and of þe felonies and  
 Boethius has  
 rightfully and  
 briefly recounted  
 the frauds of his  
 accusers.  
 fraudes of þine accusours. it semeþ þe haue I-touched  
 it forsoþe ryȝtfully and schortly. ¶ Al myȝten þo

562 *born*—MS. borne, C. born  
 566 *hys*—hise  
 566 *putte*—put  
 568 *be*—ben  
 571 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
 573 *house*—hows  
 574 [and—clos]—from C.

576 *wille*—wyl  
 576 *enhabit[e]*—enhabyte  
 578 *seye*—sey  
 578 *amoeueþ*—moueth  
 579 *myche*—mochel  
 579 *owen*—owne  
 582 *ne* (2)—omitted  
 582 *putte* (both)—put

582 *somtyme*—whilom  
 585 *decertes*—desertes  
 585 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyde  
 586 *soþe*—soth  
 587 *seid*—MS. seide, C. scyd  
 588 *opposed*—aposyd  
 589 *knowe*—knowyn

same þinges bettere *and* more plentiuously be couth 592  
 in þe mouþe of þe poeple þat knoweþ al þis. ¶ þou  
 hast eke blamed gretly *and* compleyned of þe wrongful  
 dede of þe senat. ¶ And þou hast sorwed for my  
 blame. *and* þou hast wepen for þe damage of þi re-  
 noune þat is appaired. *and* þi laste sorwe eschaufed 597  
 azeins fortune *and* compleinest þat gerdouns ne ben not  
 euenliche 3olde to þe desertes of folk. *and* in þe lattre  
 ende of þi woode muse þou pridest þat þilke pees þat  
 gouerneþ þe heuene scholde gouerne þe erþe ¶ But  
 for þat many tribulaciouns of affeccions han assailed 602  
 þe. *and* sorwe *and* Ire *and* wepyng todrawen þee  
 dyuersely ¶ As þou art now feble of þouȝt. myȝtyer  
 remedies ne schullen not ȝit touchen þe for whiche  
 we wil[e] vsen somedel lyȝter medicines. So þat þilk[e]  
 passiouns þat ben woxen harde in swellyng by per- 607  
 turbacioun folowyng in to þi þouȝt mowen woxe esy  
*and* softe to receyuen þe strenkeþ of a more myȝty *and*  
 more egré medicine by an esier touchyng.

Thou hast, said  
 Philosophy, be-  
 wailed the loss  
 of thy good name,

thou hast com-  
 plained against  
 Fortune, and  
 against the  
 unequal distribu-  
 tion of rewards  
 and punishments.

Strong medicines  
 are not proper for  
 thee now, dis-  
 tracted by grief,  
 anger, and  
 sadness.

Light medicines  
 must prepare  
 thee for sharper  
 remedies.  
 610

## CUM PHEBI RADIIS GRAUE CANCRI SIDUS ENESTUAT.

Whan þat þe heuy sterre of þe cancre eschaufed by  
 þe beme of phebus. þat is to seyne whan þat phebus  
 þe sonne is in þe signe of þe Cancre. Who so ȝeueþ  
 þan largely hys sedes to þe feldes þat refuse to re-  
 ceiuen hem. lete hym gon bygyled of trust þat he 615  
 hadde to hys corn. to acorns or okes. yif þou wilt  
 gadre violetȝ. ne go þou not to þe purper wode whan  
 þe felde chirkyngre agriseþ of colde by þe felnesse of  
 þe wynde þat hyȝt aquilon ¶ Yif þou desirest or 619

[The sixte  
 metur.]  
 He who sows his  
 seed when the  
 sun is in the  
 Sign of Cancer,  
 must look for no  
 produce.

Think not to in-  
 gather violets in  
 the wintry and  
 stormy season.

592 *be couth*—MS. be couthes,  
 C. ben couth  
 596 *wepen*—wopen  
 597 *laste*—last  
*eschaufed*—eschaufede  
 598 *not*—omitted  
 599 *zoldes*—yolden  
 602 *many*—manye  
 604 *myȝtyer*—myhtyere  
 605 *whiche*—which

606 *wil[e]*—wol  
*lyȝter*—lyhtere  
*þilk[e]*—þilke  
 607 *harde*—hard  
 608 *folowyng*—Flowyng  
*wore*—wexen  
 610 *esier*—esyere  
 612 *beme*—beemes  
*seyne*—seyn  
 614 *hys*—hise

614 *refuse*—refusen  
 615 *after hem* C. adds [s.  
 corn]  
*lete hym gon* (MS. *gone*)—  
 lat hym gon  
 616 *or*—of  
*wilt gadre*—wolt gadery  
 618 *felde*—feeld  
*felnesse*—felnesses  
 619 *hyȝt*—hyhte

If you wish for wine in autumn let the tendrils of the vine be free in the spring.

wolt vsen grapes ne seke þou nat wip a glotonus hande to streine *and* presse þe stalkes of þe vine in þe first somer sesoun. for bachus þe god of wyne hap raper  
623 zeuen his ziftes to autumpne þe latter ende of somer.

[\* fol. 8.]

To every work God assigns a proper time, nor suffers anything to pass its bounds. Success does not await him who departs from the appointed order of things.

¶ God tokeniþ *and* assigneþ \*þe tymes. ablyng hem to her propre offices. ¶ Ne he ne suffreþ not stoundes whiche þat hym self hap deuided *and* constreined to be medeled to gidre ¶ And forþi he þat forleteþ certeyne ordinaunce of doynge by ouerprowyng wey. he ne hap no glade issue or ende of hys werkes.

PRIMUM IGITUR PATERIS ROGACIONIBUS.

[The sixte prose.]

Philosophy proposes to question Boethius.

Ffirst wolt þou suffre me to touche *and* assaie þe stat of þi þouzt by a fewe demaundes. so þat I may vnderstonde what be þe manere of þi curacioun. ¶ Axe

P. Is the world governed by Chance?

633 me *quod* .I. atte þi wille what þou wilt. *and* I schal answer. ¶ þo saide sche þus. wheþer wenest þou *quod* sche þat pis worlde be gouerned by foolisshe happes

B. By no means. The Creator presides over his own works.

636 *and* fortunes. or elles wenest þou þat þer be in it any gouvernement of resoun. Certes *quod* .I. ne trowe not in no manere þat so certeyne pinges scholde be moeued by fortunouse fortune. but I wot wel þat god maker

I shall never swerve from this opinion.

640 *and* mayster is gouernour of pis werk. Ne neuer nas zit day þat myzt[e] putte me oute of þe sopenesse of þat sentence. ¶ So is it *quod* sche. for þe same ping

P. Yes! Thou didst say as much when thou didst declare man alone to be destitute of divine care. Still thou seemest to labour under some defect even in this conviction.

643 songe þou a lytel here byforne *and* byweydelest *and* bywepetest. þat only men weren put oute of þe cure of god. ¶ For of alle oþer pinges þou ne doutest nat þat þei nere gouerned by reson. but how (.i. pape.). I wondre gretly certes whi þat þou art seek. siþen þou art put in to so holesom a sentence. but lat vs seken

620 *hande*—hond  
622 *hap*—MS. *habe*  
626 *her propre*—heere pro-pres  
628 *hap*—MS. *habe*  
627 *be medeled*—ben I-medled  
628 *certeyne*—certeyn

629 *hap*—MS. *habe*  
630 *wolt þou*—woltow  
633 *atte*—at  
635 *worlds*—world  
636 *fortunes*—fortunows

638 *scholde*—sholden  
639 *wot*—MS. *wote*, C. *woot*  
641 *myzt[e] putte*—myhte put  
644 *put*—MS. *putte*  
645 *doutest*—dowdest  
646 *how*—owh  
647 *seek siþen*—syke syn  
648 *put*—MS. *putte*, C. *put*

depper. I coniecte þat þere lakkeþ I not what. but 649  
sey me þis. siþen þat þou ne doutest nat þat þis worlde Tell me how the world is governed.  
be gouerned by god ¶ wiþ swycche gouernailes takest  
þou hede þat it is gouerned. ¶ vnneþ quod .I. knowe 652  
.I. þe sentence of þi questioun. so þat I ne may nat B. I do not thoroughly comprehend your question.  
zit answeren to þi demaundes. ¶ I nas nat deceiued P. I was not deceived, then, when I said there was some defect in thy sentiment.  
quod sche þat þere ne failleþ sumwhat. by whiche þe  
maladie of perturbacioun is crept in to þi þouzt. so  
as þe strengþe of þe paleys schynyng is open. ¶ But  
seye me þis remembrest þou ouzt what is þe ende of Tell me what is the chief end of all things; and whither all things tend.  
þi þinges. whider þat þe entencioun of al kynde tendep.  
¶ I haue herd told it somtyme quod .I. but drery- 660  
nesso haþ dulled my memorie. ¶ Certys quod sche  
þou wost wel whennes þat alle þinges ben comen and 662  
proceded. I wot wel quod .I. and ansewered[e] þat B. God is the beginning of all things.  
god is þe bygynnyng of al. ¶ And how may þis be  
quod sche þat siþen þou knowest þe bygynnyng of P. How, then, art thou ignorant of their end?  
þinges. þat þou ne knowest not what is þe endyng of  
þinges. but swiche ben þe customes of perturbaciouns. 667  
and þis power þei han. þat þei may moeue a man fro  
hys place. þat is to seyne from þe stablenes and per-  
feccioun of hys knowyng. but certys þei may not al  
arace hym ne alyene hym in al. ¶ But I wolde þat 671  
þou woldest answer to þis. ¶ Remembrest þou þat  
þou art a man ¶ Boice. ¶ Whi scholde I nat remem-  
bre þat quod .I. Philosophie. ¶ Maiste þou not telle  
me þan quod sche what þing is a man. ¶ Axest not  
me quod I. wheþir þat be a resonable best mortal. I  
wot wel and I confesse wel þat I am it. ¶ Wistest  
þou neuer zit þat þou were any oþer þing quod she.

649 depper—deppers  
not what—not ners what  
650 siþen—syn  
worlde—world  
651 takest þou—takestow  
652 seye—sey  
remembrest þou — re-  
membres thow  
ouzt—omitted  
659 al—alle

660 herd told—MS. herde  
tolde  
herd told it—herd yt toold  
661 haþ—MS. haþe  
663 proceded—procedeth  
answered[e]—answerede  
664 þe—omitted  
al—alle  
665 siþen—syn  
668 fro—owt of

669 seyne from—seyen fro  
672 Remembrest þou—Re-  
membresthow  
674 Maiste þou—Maysthow  
675 þan—panne  
þing—thinge  
Axest—Axestow  
677 Wistest þou—wystest-  
how  
678 þing—thinge



- B. No. No *quod* .I. now wot I *quod* she oper cause of pi  
680 *maladie and* þat ryȝt grete ¶ þou hast left forto  
P. Now I know knowe pi self what þou art. þoruȝ whiche I haue pley-  
the principal nelyche knowen þe cause of pi *maladie*. or ellis þe  
cause of thy dis-  
temper.  
683 entre of recoueryng of þin hele. ¶ Forwhy for þou  
Thou hast lost art confounded wiþ forȝetyng of pi self. forþi sorwest  
the knowledge of þyself,  
thou knowest not  
the end of things,  
and hast for-  
gotten how the  
world is  
governed.  
689 is governed. ¶ Forþi wenest þou þat pi se mutaciouns  
These are not  
only great occa-  
sions of disease,  
but also causes of  
death itself.  
I thank God that  
Reason hath not  
wholly deserted  
thee.  
694 g[r]ete norissinges of pi hele. *and* þat is þe soþe sen-  
tence of gouernaunce of þe worlde. þat þou byleuest  
I have some  
hope of thy  
recovery since  
thou believest  
that the world is  
[\* fol. 8 b.]  
under Divine  
Providence,  
for this small  
spark shall pro-  
duce vital heat.  
700 for as muche as it is not tyme ȝitte of fastere remedies  
¶ And þe nature of þouȝtes disseiued is þis þat as ofte  
But as this is not  
the time for  
stronger  
remedies,  
and because it is  
natural to em-  
brace false  
opinions so soon  
as we have laid  
aside the true,  
from whence  
arises a mist  
that darkens the  
understanding,  
I shall endeavour  
therefore to dis-  
sipate these  
vapours so that  
you may perceive  
the true light.  
¶ And þe nature of þouȝtes disseiued is þis þat as ofte  
as þei casten awaye soþe opyniouns: þei cloþen hem in  
fals[e] opiniouns. [of whiche false opyniouns] þederknesse  
of perturbacioun wexep vp. þat comfounded þe verray  
insyȝt. *and* þat derkenes schal .I. say somewhat to  
maken þinne *and* wayk by lyȝt *and* meenelyche re-  
medies. so þat after þat þe derknes of desseyuyng  
desyrynges is don away. þou mow[e] knowe þe schyn-  
yng of verray lyȝt.

690 *hast left*—MS. hastes  
left, C. hast left  
691 *knowe*—known  
*pleynelyche knowen*—  
pleynly fwonde [=   
founde]  
694 *sorwest þou*—sorwestow  
698 *forþi demest* [þou]—  
For thy demesthow  
697 *wikked*—MS. wilked, C.

wykkyd  
688 *worlde*—world  
689 *wenest þou*—wencstow  
690 *outen*—owte  
693 *hap*—MS. hape  
al—alle  
694 *þt*—thin  
696 *vnderput*—vndyrputte  
697 to (2)—omitted  
698 *fore*—for

698 *noþing*—nothinge  
699 *spark þine heet*—sparke  
700 *muche*—meche [thin hete  
702 *awaye*—away  
703 [of—*opyniouns*—]—from  
706 *insyȝt*—insyhte [C.  
say—assaye  
708 *lyȝt*—lyhte  
708 *don*—MS. done  
mow[e]—mowe

## NUBIBUS ATRIS CONDITA.

**P**E sterres couered wip blak[e] cloudes ne mowen  
geten a doun no lyzt. ȝif þe trouble wynde þat  
hyȝt auster stormyng *and* walwyng þe see medleþ þe  
heete þat is to seyne þe boylyng vp from þe botme 713

[The seuende  
Metyr.]  
Black clouds  
obscure the light  
of the stars.

¶ þe wawes þat somtyme weren clere as glas *and*  
lyke to þe fair[e] bryȝt[e] dayes wipstant anon þe  
syȝtes of men. by þe filþe *and* ordure þat is resolved.  
*and* þe fletyng streme þat royleþ doun dyuersely fro  
heyȝe mountaignes is arestid *and* resisted ofte tyme  
by þe encountrynge of a stoon þat is departid *and* 719

If the south wind  
renders the sea  
tempestuous, the  
waves, fouled  
with mud, will  
lose their glassy  
clearness.

fallen from some roche. ¶ And forþi yif þou wilt  
loken *and* demen soþe wip clere lyzt. *and* holde þe  
weye wip a ryȝt paþe. ¶ Weyue þou ioie. drif fro þe  
drede. fleme þou hope. ne lat no sorwe aproche. þat is  
to sein lat noon of þise four passiouns ouer come þe.  
or blynde þe. for cloudy *and* dirke is pilk þouȝt *and*  
bounde with bridles. where as þise þinges regnen. 726

If thou wouldst  
see truth by the  
clearest light,  
pursue the path  
of right.  
Away with joy,  
fear, hope, and  
sorrow.

Let none of these  
passions cloud  
thy mind.

Where these  
things control,  
the soul is bound  
by strong fetters.

## EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

## INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

## POSTEA [PAU]LISPER CONTIGUIT.

**A**fter þis she stynte a litel. and after þat she hadde  
gadred by atempre stillenesse myn attencioun she 728  
seide þus. ¶ As who so myȝt[e] seye þus. After þise  
þinges she stynt[e] a lytel. *and* whanne she aper-  
ceiued[e] by atempre stillenesse þat I was ententif to  
herkene hire. she bygan to speke in þis wyse. ¶ Yif 732

[The fyrst prose.]

Philosophy ex-  
horts Boethius  
not to torment  
himself on  
account of his  
losses.

710 blak[e]—blake  
712 stormyng—turnyng  
713 from—fro  
714 somtyme—whilom  
715 lyke—lyk  
fair[e] — wipstant (MS.  
wipstante)—fayre cleere  
dayes *and* brihte with-  
stand

716 syȝtes—syhtes  
717 streme—strem  
718 heyȝe—hy  
720 from some—fram som  
wilt—wolt  
721 soþe—soth  
clere—cleer  
holde—holden  
722 weye—wey

722 paþe—paath  
724 come—comen  
725 blynde—blende  
pilk—thilke  
727 she (2)—I  
729 myȝt[e] seye—myhte seyn  
730 stynt[e]—stynte  
732 hire—here

733 I *quod* she haue vnderstonden *and* knowe vtterly þe  
 Thou art, she  
 says, affected by  
 the loss of thy  
 former fortune.  
 causes *and* þe habit of þi maladie. þou languissed *and*  
 art deffeted for talent *and* desijr of þi raper fortune.

736 ¶ She þat ilke fortune only þat is chaunged as þou  
 It hath perverted  
 thy faculties.  
 I am well ac-  
 quainted with all  
 the wiles of that  
 Prodigy (i. e.  
 Fortune).  
 finest to þe ward. haþ peruerted þe clerenesse *and* þe  
 astat of þi corage. ¶ I vnderstonde þe felefolde  
 colour *and* deceites of þilke merueillous monstre for-  
 tune. and how she vseþ ful flatryng familiarite wiþ hem

741 þat she enforceþ to bygyle. so longe til þat she con-  
 founde wiþ vnsuffreable sorwe hem þat she haþ left

743 in despeir vnpurueyed. ¶ *and* if þou remembrest wel  
 Though she has  
 left thee, thou  
 hast not lost any-  
 thing of beauty  
 or of worth.  
 þe kynde þe maners *and* þe desert of þilke fortune. þow  
 shalt wel knowe as in hir þou neuer ne haddest ne  
 hast ylost any fair þing. But as I trowe I shal not

747 gretly trauaile to don þe remembren of þise þinges.  
 Thou wert once  
 proof against her  
 allurements.  
 ¶ For þou were wont to hurtlen [*and* despysen] hir  
 wiþ manly wordes whan she was blaundissinge *and*  
 presente *and* pursawedest hir wiþ sentences þat were

751 drawn oute of myne entre. þat is to seyne out of  
 But sudden  
 change works a  
 great alteration  
 in the minds  
 of men, hence  
 it is that thou art  
 departed from  
 thy usual peace  
 of mind.  
 But with some  
 gentle emollents  
 I shall prepare  
 thee for stronger  
 medicines.  
 Approach then,  
 Rhetoric,  
 with thy per-  
 suasive charms,  
 and therewith let  
 Music also draw  
 near.  
 myn informacioun ¶ But no sudeyne mutacioun ne  
 bytided nat wiþ outen a maner chaungyng of curages.  
 and so is it byfallen þat þou art departed a litel fro  
 þe pees of þi þouzt. but now is tyme þat þou drynke  
*and* atast[e] some softe *and* delitable þinges. so þat whan  
 þei ben entred wiþ inne þe. it mow make weye to  
 strengre drynkes of medycynes. ¶ Com nowe furþe  
 perfore þe suasioun of swetnesse Rethoryen. whiche  
 þat goþ oonly þe ryzt wey whil she forsakeþ not myne  
 estatutz. ¶ *And* wiþ Rethorice com forþe musice a

762 damoiseil of oure house þat syngeþ now lyzter moedes

733 knowe vtterly—knownen  
 owtrelly  
 734 languissed—languyssest  
 737 haþ—MS. haþe  
 738 astat—estat  
 felefolde—felefold  
 739 colour—colours  
 deceites (MS. decrites) —  
 deceytes  
 merueillous—meruayles  
 742 haþ—MS. haþe  
 743 if—yif

746 any (MS. my)—any  
 þing—þinge  
 747 trauaile—travaylen  
 don—do  
 remembren of—remenbre  
 on  
 748 [*and* despysen]—from C.  
 749 was—omitted  
 750 were—weren  
 751 myne—myn  
 seyne—sayn  
 752 sudeyne—sodeyn

753 outen—owte  
 757 inne—in  
 mow — weye — mowe  
 maken wey  
 758 strengre—strengere  
 Com nowe furþe — MS.  
 Come; C. Com now forth  
 760 goþ—MS. goþe  
 761 com—MS. come, C. com  
 762 house—hows  
 lyzter—lyhters

or prolaciouns now heuyer. \*what ayleþ þe man. what [\* fol. 9.]  
is it þat haþ cast þe in to murnyng *and* in to wepyng. 764

I trow[e] þat þou hast sen some newe þing *and* un-  
coupe. ¶ þou wenest þat fortune be chaunged azeins  
þe ¶ But þou wenest wrong. yif þou [þat] wene.  
Alwey þo ben hire maners. she haþ raþer [kept] as to 768

þe ward hire propre stablenes in þe chaungyng of hyre  
self. ¶ Ryzt swyche was she whan she flatered[e]  
þe. *and* desseined[e] þe wiþ vnleueful lykynges of  
false welefulnesse. þou hast now knowen *and* ataynt 772

þe doutous or double visage of þilke blynde goddesse  
fortune. ¶ She þat ȝit couereþ hir *and* wympleþ hir  
to oþer folk. haþ shewed hir euerydel to þe. ¶ ȝif  
þou approuest hir *and* þenkest þat she is good. vse 776

hir maners *and* pleyne þe nat. ¶ And if þou agrisest  
hir fals[e] trecherie. dispise *and* cast aweye hir þat  
pleyep so harmefully. for she þat is now cause of so  
myche sorwe to þe. sholde be to þe cause of pees *and* 780

[of] ioie. ¶ she haþ forsaken þe forsoþe. þe whiche  
þat neuer man may be syker þat she ne shal forsake  
hym. *Glose.* ¶ But napeles some bookes han þe text  
þus. For soþe she haþ forsaken þe ne þer nis no man 784

syker þat she ne haþ not forsaken. ¶ Holdest þou  
þan þilke welefulnesse precieuse to þe þat shal passen.  
*and* is present fortune derworpi to þe. whiche þat nis  
not feiþful forto dwelle. *and* whan she goþ aweye þat  
she bryngeþ a wyȝt in sorwe ¶ For syn she may nat  
be wiþholden at a mans wille. she makeþ hym a wrecche  
when she departep fro hym. ¶ What oþer þing is 791

785 forsaken—forsake  
Holdest þou—holdestow  
786 þan—thanne  
precieuse—presyes  
787 derworpi—dereworthe  
whiche—which  
788 feiþful—feythfullo  
goþ—MS. gobe  
aweye—away  
789 mans—mannys  
791 when—wan  
þing—thingo

763 prolaciouns — probasy-  
ons  
heuyer—heuyere  
ayleþ—eyleth  
766 trow[e]—trowe  
sen—MS. sene, C. seyn  
some—som  
þing—thinge  
uncoupe—vinkowth  
768 azeins—ayein  
767 wenest—weenes  
[þat]—C. that  
768 haþ—MS. haþe  
[kept]—from C.

769 stablenes in þe—stabyl-  
nesse standeth in the  
770 swyche—swich  
771 vnleueful—vulleful  
775 haþ—MS. had, C. hat  
776 good—MS. goode, C. god  
777 agrisest—MS. agrised, C.  
agrysyst  
778 fals[e]—false  
780 myche—mochel  
781 [of]—from C.  
haþ—MS. haþe  
783 text—texte  
784 haþ—MS. haþe

785 forsaken—forsake  
Holdest þou—holdestow  
786 þan—thanne  
precieuse—presyes  
787 derworpi—dereworthe  
whiche—which  
788 feiþful—feythfullo  
goþ—MS. gobe  
aweye—away  
789 mans—mannys  
791 when—wan  
þing—thingo

763 prolaciouns — probasy-  
ons  
heuyer—heuyere  
ayleþ—eyleth  
766 trow[e]—trowe  
sen—MS. sene, C. seyn  
some—som  
þing—thinge  
uncoupe—vinkowth  
768 azeins—ayein  
767 wenest—weenes  
[þat]—C. that  
768 haþ—MS. haþe  
[kept]—from C.

769 stablenes in þe—stabyl-  
nesse standeth in the  
770 swyche—swich  
771 vnleueful—vulleful  
775 haþ—MS. had, C. hat  
776 good—MS. goode, C. god  
777 agrisest—MS. agrised, C.  
agrysyst  
778 fals[e]—false  
780 myche—mochel  
781 [of]—from C.  
haþ—MS. haþe  
783 text—texte  
784 haþ—MS. haþe

What is she  
(Fortune) but the  
presage of future  
calamity?

fitting fortune but a manere shewyng of wrycchednesse  
þat is to comen. ne it ne suffriþ nat oo[n]ly to loken

794 of þing þat is present byforne þe eyen of man. but  
wisdom lokeþ *and* mesureþ þe ende of þinges. *and* þe

Her mutability  
should make men  
neither fear her  
threats nor desire  
her favours.

796 same chaungyng from one to an oper. þat is to seyne  
fro aduersite to prosperite makeþ þat þe manaces of  
fortune ne ben not forto dreden. ne þe flatrynges of  
hir to ben desired. ¶ þus atte þe last it byhoueþ þe  
to suffren wiþ euene wille in pacience al þat is don

801 inwiþ þe floor of fortune. þat is to seyne in þis worlde.

If you submit to  
her yoke you  
must patiently  
endure her  
infections.

¶ Syþen þou hast oones put þi nekke vnder þe zokke  
of hir. for if þou wilt write a lawe of wendying *and*  
dwellyng to fortune whiche þat þou hast chosen frely

805 to be þi lady ¶ Art þou nat wrongful in þat *and*

Impatience will  
only embitter  
your loss.

makest fortune wroþe *and* aspere by þin inpacience.  
*and* zit þou mayst not chaungen hir. ¶ Yif þou com-

You cannot  
choose your port  
if you leave your  
vessel to the  
mercy of the  
winds.

mittest [*and*] bitakest þi sayles to þe wynde. þou shalt  
be shouen not pider þat þou woldest(:) but whider þat  
þe wynde shoueþ þe ¶ Yif þou castest þi seedes in þe

811 feldeþ þou sholdest haue in mynde þat þe ȝeres ben

You have given  
yourself up to  
Fortune; it be-  
comes you there-  
fore to obey her  
commanda.

oper while plenteuous *and* oper while bareyne. ¶ þou  
hast bytaken þiself to þe gouernaunce of fortune.  
*and* forþi it byhoueþ þe to ben obeisaunt to þe manere

Would you stop  
the rolling of her  
wheel?

of þi lady. *and* enforcest þou þe to aresten or wiþ-  
stonden þe swyftnesse *and* þe sweyes of hir tournyng

Fool! if Fortune  
once became  
stable she would  
cease to exist.

whele. ¶ O þou fool of alle mortel foolles if fortune  
bygan to dwelle stable. she cesed[e] þan to ben fortune.

793 *suffriþ*—suffiseth  
794 *of þing*—on thyng  
796 *byforne*—MS. byforne by-  
forne  
796 *man*—a man  
796 *mesureþ*—amesureth  
796 *from one*—fram oon  
796 *seyne*—seyn  
797 *fro*—from  
797 *to*—into  
799 *atte þe last*—at the laste

801 *seyne*—seyn  
801 *worlde*—world  
802 *Syþen*—Syn  
802 *zokke*—yoke  
803 *if*—yif  
803 *write*—wryten  
804 *whiche*—which  
806 *lady*—ladye  
806 *Art þou*—Artow  
806 *wroþe*—wroth  
806 *þin*—thine

807 *chaungen*—chaunge  
808 [*and*]—from C.  
809 *pider*—thedyr  
809 *whider*—whedyr  
811 *haue*—hau  
814 *manere*—maneres  
815 *and*—omitted  
815 *wiþstonden*—withholden  
816 *sweyes*—swey3  
818 *cesed[e]*—cesede

## HEC CUM SUPERBA.

Whan fortune wiþ a proude ryzt hande haþ turnid  
 hir chaungyng stoundes she fareþ lyke þe maners  
 of þe boillyng eurippe. *Glose.* Eurippe is an arme of  
 þe see þat ebbith and flowiþ. and somtyme þe streme 822  
 is on one syde and somtyme on þat oþer. *Texte* ¶ She  
 cruel fortune kasteth adoune kynges þat somtyme weren  
 ydred. and she deceiuable enhaunseth vp þe humble  
 chere of hym þat is discomfited. and she neyþer hereþ 826  
 ne reccheþ of wrecched[e] wepynges. and she is so harde  
 þat she lauzeþ and scorneþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche  
 she haþ maketh wepe wiþ hir free wille. ¶ þus she  
 pleyeth and þus she preueþ hir strengþe and sheweþ a  
 grete wondre to alle hir seruauzt. ¶ Yif þat a wyzt  
 is seyn weleful and ouerþrowe in an houre. 832

[The fyrst metar.  
 Fortune is as in-  
 constant as the  
 ebb and flow of  
 Euripus.

She huris kings  
 from their  
 thrones, and  
 exalts the cap-  
 tive.

She turns a deaf  
 ear to the tears  
 and cries of the  
 wretched.

Thus she sports  
 and boasts her  
 power and pre-  
 sents a marvel  
 to her servants  
 if, in the space of  
 an hour, a man is  
 hurled from  
 happiness into  
 adversity.

## VELLEM AUTEM PAUCA.

Certis I wolde plete wiþ þee a fewe þinges vsyng  
 þe wordes of fortune tak heede now pi self. yif þat  
 she axeþ ryzt. \* ¶ O þou man wher fore makest þou  
 me gilty by þine euerydayes pleynynges. what wronges  
 haue I don þe. what goodes haue I byreft þe þat weren  
 þine. stryf or plete wiþ me by fore what iuge þat þou  
 wilt of þe possessioun of rycchesse or of dignites ¶ And  
 yif þou maist shewe me þat euer any mortal man haþ 840  
 receyued any of þese þinges to ben his in propre. þan  
 wol I graunt[e] frely þat [alle] þilke þinges weren þine  
 whiche þat þou axest. ¶ Whan þat nature brouzt[e] þe  
 forþe out of pi moder wombe. I receyued[e] þe naked

[The secunde  
 prose.]  
 Philosophy ex-  
 postulates with  
 \* fol. 9 b.  
 Boethius in the  
 name of Fortune.  
 Why do you  
 accuse me (For-  
 tune) as guilty?  
 What goods or  
 advantages have  
 I deprived you  
 of?

Can you prove  
 that ever any  
 man had a fixed  
 property in his  
 riches?

You came naked  
 into the world,

819 *proude*—prowd  
*hande*—hand  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
 820 *lyke*—lik  
 821 *arme*—arm  
 822 *strems*—strem  
 823 *one*—o  
 824 *adowne*—adown  
*somtyme*—whilom  
 825 *ydred* (MS. *yðredde*)—  
*humble*—vmble [ydrad]  
 827 *reccheþ*—rekkeþ

827 *wrecched[e]*—wrecchede  
*harde*—hard  
 828 *lauzeþ*—lysseth  
*wepyng*—wepynges  
 830 *strengþe*—strengthes  
 833 *plete*—pleten  
 834 *tak*—MS. take, C. tak  
 835 *makest þou*—makes thow  
 836 *wronges*—wronge  
 837 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*byreft*—MS. hyrefte, C.  
*byreft*

838 *stryf*—MS. stryue, C. stryf  
*plete*—pleten  
*by fore*—by forn  
 839 *wilt*—wolt  
*rycchesse*—rychesses  
 840 *shewe*—shewyn  
*euer*—euere  
*haþ*—MS. haþe  
 841 *þese*—þo  
*his*—hise  
 842 *graunt[e]*—graunte  
*[alle]*—from C.

and I cherished  
you

and encompassed  
you with  
affluence.

Now that I have  
a mind to with-  
draw my boun'y,  
be thankful and  
complain not.

Riches and  
honours are sub-  
ject to me.  
They are my  
servants, and  
come and go with  
me.

Shall I alone be  
forbidden to use  
my own right?  
Doth not heaven  
give us sunny  
days and obscure  
the same with  
dark nights?  
Is not the earth  
covered with  
frost as well as  
with flowers?

The sea some-  
times appears  
calm, and at  
other times  
terrifies us with  
its tempestuous  
waves.

Shall I be bound  
to constancy by  
the covetousness  
of men?

I turn my rolling  
wheel and amuse  
myself with  
exalting what

and nedy of al þing. and I norysshed[e] þe wiþ my  
rychesse. and was redy and ententif þoruþ my fauour to

847 sustene þe. ¶ And þat makeþ þe now incapient azeins

me. and I envirounde þe wiþ al þe habundaunce and  
shinyng of al goodes þat ben in my ryzt. ¶ Now it  
lykeþ me to wiþ drawe myne hande. þou hast had grace  
as he þat haþ vsed of foreyne goodes. þou hast no ryzt to  
pleyne þe. as þouþ þou haddest vtterly lorn alle þi

853 þinges. whi pleyneþ þou þan. I haue don þe no wrong.

Ricches honoures and swyche oþer þinges ben of my  
ryzt. ¶ My seruauntes knowen me for hir lady. þei  
comen wiþ me and departen whan I wende. I dar wel  
afferment hardly. þat yif þo þinges of whiche þou

858 pleyneþ þat þou hast forlorn hadde ben þine. þou ne

haddest not lorn hem. ¶ shal I þan only be defended  
to vse my ryzt. ¶ Certis it is leueful to þe heuene to  
make clere dayes. and after þat to keuere þe same dayes  
wiþ derke nyztes. ¶ þe erþe haþ eke leue to apparaile  
þe visage of þe erþe now with floures and now wiþ  
fruyt. and to confounde hem somtyme wiþ raynes and

865 wiþ coldes. ¶ þe see haþ eke hys ryzt to be som-

tyme calme and blaundyshing wiþ smope water. and  
somtyme to be horrible wiþ wawes and wiþ tempestes.

¶ But þe couetyse of men þat may not be staunched  
shal it bynde me to be stedfast. syn þat stedfastnesse  
is vnkouþ to my maneres. ¶ Swyche is my strengþe.

871 and þis pley. I pley[e] continuely. I tourne þe whirlyng

whele wiþ þe tournyng cercle ¶ I am glade to chaunge  
þe lowest to þe heyeste. and þe heyest to þe loweste.

845 *al þing*—alle thinges  
*norysshed[e]*—noryssede.

846 *rychesse*—rychesses

848, 849 *al*—alle

848 *habundaunce*—abound-  
aunce

850 *wiþ*—*hande*—with-  
drawen myn hand

*had*—MS. hadde, C. had

861 *haþ*—MS. haþe

862 *vtterly*—outrely  
*lorn*—MS. lorue, C. for  
lorn

853 *don*—MS. done, C. don

864 *Ricches*—Rychesse

858 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne,  
C. forlorn

859 *lorn*—MS. lorne, C. lorn

860 *vse*—vsen

861 *keuere þe*—coeueryn tho

862 *derke*—dirk

*erþe*—yer

*haþ*—MS. haþe

864 *confounde*—confownden

865 *haþ*—MS. haþe

866 *calme*—kalm

867 (2nd) *wiþ*—omitted

869 *stedfast*—stidefast

*stedfastnesse*—stidefast-  
nesse

870 *vnkouþ*—MS. vnkouþe,  
C. vnkowth

*Swyche*—Swych

871 *pley[e]*—pleye

872 *whele*—wheel

*glade*—glad

*chaunge*—chaungyn

worþe vp yif þou wilt. so it be by þis lawe. þat þou  
ne holde not þat I do þe wronge þou; þou descende  
doun whanne resoun of my pleye axeþ it. Wost þou  
not how Cresus kyng of lyndens of whiche kyng Cirus  
was ful sore agast a litel byforne þat þis rewlyche 878  
Cresus was cauȝt of Cirus and lad to þe fjr to be  
brent. but þat a reyne descended[e] doun from heuene  
þat rescowed[e] hym ¶ And is it out of þi mynde how  
þat Paulus consul of Rome whan he hadde take þe  
kyng of perciens weep pitou[s]ly for þe captiuitee of þe 883  
self[e] kyng. What oþer þinges bywaylen þe criinges of  
Tragedies. but only þe dedes of fortune. þat wiþ an  
vnwar stroke ouerturneþ þe realmes of grete nobley  
¶ *Glose.* Tragedie is to seyne a dite of a prosperite for  
a tyme þat endiþ in wretchednesse. Lernedest nat þou  
in grek whan þou were ȝonge þat in þe entre or in þe  
seler of Iuppiter þer ben couched two tunnes. þat on  
is ful of good þat oþer is ful of harme. ¶ What ryȝt  
hast þou to pleyne. yif þou hast taken more plenteuously  
of þe goode syde þat is to seyne of my rycchesse and  
prosperites. and what eke. yif I be nat departed fro þe. 894  
What eke. yif my mutabilitie ȝiueþ þe ryȝtful cause of  
hope to han ȝit better þinges. ¶ Napeles desmaie þe  
nat in þi þouȝt. and þou þat art put in comune realme  
of alle : ne desijr[e] nat to lyue by þine oonly propre ryȝt.

was low, and  
bringing down  
what was high.  
Ascend if you  
will, but come  
down when my  
sport requires it.

Know you not  
the history of  
Cresus and of  
Paulus Æmilius?

What else does  
the weeping  
muse of Tragedy  
deplore but the  
overthrow of  
kingdoms by  
the indiscrimi-  
nate strokes of  
Fortune?  
Did you not learn  
whilst a youth,  
that at the gates  
of Jove's palace  
stand two vessels,  
one full of bless-  
ings, the other of  
woes?

What if you have  
drunk too deep of  
the first vessel?

My mutability  
gives thee hope  
of happier days.

Desire not to be  
exempted from  
the vicissitudes of  
humanity.

## SI QUANTAS RAPIDIS.

þouȝ plentee þat is goddesse of rycches hielde adoun [the secunde  
metur.]  
wiþ ful horn. and wiþdraweþ nat hir hand. ¶ As Though Plenty,  
from her teeming  
horn, poured  
down as many  
many recches as þe see turneþ vpwardes sandes whan it

874 worþe—worth  
wilt—wolt  
876 doun—adoun  
whanne—wan  
pleye—pley  
Wost þou—wistesthow  
877 kyng (1)—the kyng  
lyndens—lydyens  
878 byforne—byforn  
880 reyne descended[e]—

rayn descendede  
880 from—fro  
881 rescowed[e]—rescowede  
882 take—takyn  
885 an—a  
886 þe—omitted  
887 seyne—seyne  
890 tunnes—tonnes  
891 harme—harm  
892 hast þou—hasthow

893 seyne—seyne  
rycchesse—rychesses  
894 I be nat—I ne be nat al  
896 better—beters  
898 lyue—lyuen  
þine—thin  
899 rycches—rychesses  
901 recches—rychesses  
vpwardes—vpward



riches on the  
world as there  
are sands on the  
sea-shore, or  
stars in heaven,  
mankind would  
not cease to com-  
plain.  
[\* fol. 10.]

Though Heaven  
may grant  
every desire, they  
will still cry for  
more.

What rein can  
restrain unbound-  
ed avarice?

He who thinks  
himself poor,  
though he be  
rich, doth truly  
labour under  
poverty.

is moeued wip rauysshing blastes. or ellys as many  
rycches as þer shynen bryzt[e] sterres on heuene on þe  
sterry nyzt. 3it for al þat mankynde nolde not cesce to  
wope wrecched[e] pleyntes. ¶ And al be it so \*þat  
906 god receyueþ gladly her prayers and 3eueþ hem as ful  
large muche golde and apparaileþ coueytous folk wip  
noble or clere honours. 3it semeþ hem haue I-gete no-  
ping. but alwey her cruel ravyne deuourynge al þat þei  
910 han geten shewip oþer gapinges. þat is to seye gapen  
and desiren 3it after moo rycchesse. ¶ What brideles  
myzten wipholde to any certeyne ende þe desordene  
coueitise of men ¶ Whan euere þe rapen þat it fletip in  
large 3iftis: þe more ay brenneþ in hem þe þrest of  
hauyng. ¶ Certis he þat quakyng and dredeful weneþ  
916 hym seluen nedy. he ne lyueþ neuere mo ryche.

## HIIS IGITUR SI PRO SE.

[The thrydde  
prose.]  
If Fortune spake  
thus to you, you  
could not defend  
your complaint.

B. What you  
have said is very  
specious, but  
such discourses  
are only sweet  
while they strike  
our ears.  
They cannot  
efface the deep  
impressions that  
misery has made  
in the heart.

þefore yif þat fortune spake wip þe for hir self in  
þis manere. For soþe þou ne haddest [nat] what  
þou myztest answeren. and if þou hast any þing wher-  
wip. þou mayist ryztfully tellen þi compleynt. ¶ It  
921 byhoueþ þe to shewen it. and .I. wol 3eue þe space to  
tellen it. ¶ Certeynely quod I þan þise ben faire  
þinges and enoyntid wip hony swetnesse of rethorike  
and musike. and only while þei ben herd þei ben de-  
licieuse. ¶ But to wrecches is a deppere felyng of  
harme. þis is to seyn þat wrecches felen þe harmes þat  
þei suffren more greuously þan þe remedies or þe delites  
928 of þise wordes mowe gladen or comforten hem. so þat

902 rauysshing—rauysynge  
903 rycches—rycheses  
bryzt[e]—bryhte  
on (1)—in  
904 nyzt—nyhtes  
905 wope wrecched[e]—wepe  
wrechede  
906 her—hir  
ful—fool  
907 muche—moche  
folk—men

908 haue—hauen  
I-gete—I-getyn  
909 her—hir  
910 seye—seyn  
911 rycchesse—rycheses  
912 wipholde—wytholden  
certeyne—certeyn  
914 þrest—thurst  
915 dredeful—dredful  
916 lyueþ—leueth  
918 [nat]—from C.

919 if—yif  
920 mayist—mayst  
tellen—defendyn  
921 3eue—yeuyn  
922 þan—þanne  
þen—bet (= beth)  
923 swetnesse—swetenesse  
924 while—whil  
herd—MS. herde  
926 harme—harm  
928 mowe—mowen

whan pise pinges stynten forto soun[e] in eres. þe sorwe 929

pat is inset greueþ þe þouzt. Ryzt so is it *quod* she.

¶ For pise ne ben zit none remedies of þi maladie. but

þei ben a manere norissinges of þi sorwe zit rebel

azeyne þi curacioun. ¶ For whan pat tyme is. I shal

moue swiche pinges þat percen hem self depe. ¶ But

napeles þat þou shalt not wilne to leten þi self a

wrecche. ¶ Hast þou forȝeten þe noumbre *and* þe

manere of þi welefulnesse. I holde me stille how pat

þe souerayn men of þe Citee token þe in cure *and*

kepyng whan þou were orphelyn of fadir *and* modir.

*and* were chosen in affinite of princes of þe Citee.

¶ And þou bygunne raper to ben leef *and* deere þan 941

forto ben a neyȝbour. þe whiche þing is þe most pre-

ciousse kynde of any propinquitee or aliaunce þat may

ben. ¶ Who is it þat ne seide þou nere ryzt weleful 944

wiþ so grete a nobley of þi fadres in lawe. ¶ *And* wiþ

þe chastite of þi wijf. *and* wiþ þe oportunitie *and*

noblesse of þi masculyn children. þat is to seyne þi

sones *and* ouer al þis me lyst to passe of comune pinges. 948

¶ How þou haddest in þi þouzt dignitees þat weren

warned to olde men. but it deliteþ me to comen now to

þe singuler vphepyng of þi welefulnesse. ¶ Yif any

fruyt of mortal pinges may han any weyȝte or price of 952

welefulnesse. ¶ Myȝtest þou euere forȝeten for any

charge of harme þat myȝt[e] byfallen. þe remembraunce

of pilke day þat þou sey[e] þi two sones maked con-

seillers. *and* ylad to gidre from þin house vndir so gret

assemble of senatours. *and* vndir þe blyþenesse of poeple. 957

*and* whan þou say[e] hem sette in þe court in her

P. So it is indeed; for my arguments are not designed as remedies, but as lenitives only.

When time serves, I will administer those things that shall reach the seat of your disease.

But you are not among the number of the wretched.

I shall not speak of your happiness in being provided for (in your orphanage) by the chief men of the city;

nor of your noble alliance with Festus and Symmachus;

nor of your virtuous wife, and manly sons.

Can you ever forget the memorable day that saw your two sons invested with the dignity of Consuls?

929 *soun[e]*—sowne  
930 *inset*—MS. *insette*, C.  
inset  
932 *sorwe*—sorwes  
933 *azeyne*—ayein  
934 *moue swiche*—moeue  
swych  
938 *souerayn*—souerane  
942 *neyȝbour*—neyashebour  
944 *nere*—were

945 *nobley*—nobleye  
*fadres*—fadyr-is  
947 *seyne*—seyn  
948 *lyst*—lyste  
*passe of*—passen the  
949 *þouȝt*—yowthe  
950 *warned*—werned  
952 *fruyt*—frute  
*price*—pris  
953 *Myȝtest þou*—myhtes-

thow  
954 *harme*—harm  
*myȝt[e] byfallen*—myhte  
befalle  
955 *sey[e]*—saye  
956 *from*—fro  
*gret*—MS. *grete*, C. *gret*  
958 *say[e]*—saye  
*sette*—set  
*her*—heere

When in the  
circus you satis-  
fied the ex-  
pectant multi-  
tude with a  
triumphal  
largess?

By your expres-  
sions you  
flattered Fortune,  
and obtained  
from her a gift  
which never be-  
fore fell to any  
private person.

Will you there-  
fore call Fortune  
to account?  
She now begins,  
I own, to look  
unkindly on you;  
but if you con-  
sider the number  
of your blessings,  
[\* fol. 10 b.]  
you must confess  
that you are still  
happy.

These evils that  
you suffer are but  
transitory.

Can there be any  
stability in  
human affairs,  
when the life of  
man is exposed to  
dissolution every  
hour?

The last day of  
life puts an end  
to Prosperity.  
What matters it  
then, whether  
you by death  
leave it, or it  
(Fortune) by  
flight doth leave  
you?

961 *bytwyx*—bytwyen  
962 *hyt*—hihte  
963 *of* (1)—of the  
    *about*—abowten  
964 *wip*—with so  
965 *3aue*—MS. þan, C. 3aue  
    *of*—to  
966 *seyne*—seyn  
967 *accoted[e]*—acoyede  
968 *norrshed[e]*—noryssede  
    *owen*—owne  
    *þou* — *of* — thow bar  
    away of

969 *had*—MS. hadde  
    *swiche*—swich  
970 *preue*—pryue  
971 *leye*—lye  
    *hap*—MS. hape  
972 *wykked*—wyckede  
973 *blysses*—blysse  
974 *forsake*—forsakyn  
    *nart*—art  
    *blysful*—blyssesful  
975 *soory*—sorye  
    *strate*—fyrst  
976 *sodeyne*—sodeyn

979 *shadowe*—shadwe  
980 *stedfastnesse*—stedefast-  
981 *swifte*—swyft [nesse  
    *dissolueþ*—dyssoledde  
983 *al þou3 þat*—al þat  
    *thowgh*  
    *fortunous*—fortune  
984 *willen dwelle*—wolen  
    *last[e]*—laste [dwellyn  
986 *hap*—MS. hape  
    *wenist þou*—weenestow  
987 *þar recche*—dar recke  
988 *away*—away

chaieres of dignites. ¶ þou rethorien or pronouncere  
of kynges preysinges. deseruedest glorie of wit and of  
eloquence. whan þou sitting bytwix þi two sones con-  
seillers in þe place þat hyt Circo. and fulfildest þe

963 abydyng of multitude of poeple þat was sprad about þe  
wip large praysynge and laude as men synge in vic-  
tories. þo 3aue þou wordes of fortune as I trowe. þat  
is to seyne. þo feffedest þou fortune wip glosynge  
wordes and desseiuedest hir. whan she accoted[e] þe  
and norshed[e] þe as hir owen delices. ¶ þou hast

969 had of fortune a 3ifte þat is to seyn swiche gerdoun  
þat she neu[er]e 3af to preue man ¶ Wilt þou perfore  
leye a rekenyng wip fortune. she hap now twynkeled  
first vpon þe wip a wykked eye. ¶ Yif þou considere  
þe noubre and þe manere of þi blysses. and of þi  
sorwes. \*þou maist nat forsake þat þou nart 3it blysful.

For if þou perfore wenest þi self nat weleful for þinges  
þat þo semeden ioiful ben passed. ¶ þer nis nat whi  
þou sholdest wene þi self a wrecche. for þinges þat now  
semen soory passen also. ¶ Art þou now comen firste

979 a sodeyne gest in to þe shadowe or tabernacle of þis  
lijf. or trowest þou þat any stedfastnesse be in mannis  
þinges. ¶ Whan ofte a swifte houre dissolueþ þe same  
man. þat is to seyne whan þe soule departiþ fro þe  
body. For al þou3 þat yelde is þer any feiþ þat for-  
tunous þinges willen dwelle. 3it napeles þe last[e] day  
of a mannis lijf is a manere deep to fortune. and also  
to pilke þat hap dwelt. and perfore what wenist þou  
þar recche yif þou forlete hir in deyng or ellys þat she  
fortune forlete þe in fleenge away.

## CUM PRIMO POLO.

Whan phebus þe sonne bygynneþ to spreden his clere- [The .iiij. Metur.]  
 nesse with rosene chariettes. þan þe sterre ydimmyd  
 paleþ hir white cheres. by þe flamus of þe sonne þat  
 ouer comeþ þe sterre lyzt. ¶ Þis is to seyn whan þe  
 sonne is risen þe day sterre wexiþ pale and lesiþ hir 993  
 lyzt for þe grete bryztnesse of þe sonne. ¶ Whan þe  
 wode wexeþ redy of rosene floures in þe first somer  
 sesoun þoruþ þe breþe of þe wynde Zephirus þat wexeþ  
 warme. ¶ Yif þe cloudy wynde auster blowe felliche. 997  
 þan goþ away þe fayrnesse of þornes. Ofte þe see is  
 clere and calme wipoute moeuyng floodes. And ofte  
 þe horrible wynde aquilon moeueþ boylyng tempestes 1000  
 and ouerwhelweþ þe see. ¶ Yif þe forme of þis worlde  
 is so [zeelde] stable. and yif it tourniþ by so many  
 entrechaungynges. wilt þou þan trusten in þe trublyng  
 fortunes of men. wilt þou trowen in flittyng goodes. 1004  
 It is certeyne and establissed by lawe perdurable þat no  
 þing þat is engendred nys stedfast no stable.

The stars pale be-  
 fore the light of  
 the rising sun.

Westerly winds  
 deck the wood  
 with roses, but  
 easterly winds  
 cause their  
 beauty to fade.

Now the sea is  
 calm, and again  
 it is tempestuous.

If all things thus  
 vary, will you  
 trust in transitory  
 riches?

All here below is  
 unstedfast and  
 unstable.

## TUNC EGO UERA INQUAM.

þAnne seide I þus. O norice of alle uertues þou [The ferthe prose.]  
 seist ful soþe. ¶ Ne I may nat forsake þe ryzt[e]  
 swifte cours of my prosperitee. þat is to seine. þat  
 prosperitee ne be comen to me wondir swiftly and 1010  
 soone. but þis is a þing þat gretly smertiþ me whan it  
 remembreþ me. ¶ For in alle aduersitees of fortune þe  
 most vnsele kynde of contrariouse fortune is to han  
 ben weleful. ¶ But þat þou quod she abaist þus þe  
 tourment of þi fals[e] opinioun þat maist þou not ryzt-

B. I cannot deny  
 my sudden and  
 early prosperity.

It is the remem-  
 brance of former  
 happiness that  
 adds most to  
 man's infelicity.

P. Recollect that  
 you have yet  
 much affluence.

988 his—hyr  
 990 þan—thanne  
 991 flamus—flambes  
 995 redy—rody  
 rosene—rosyn  
 997 warme—warm  
 998 goþ—MS. goþe, C. goth  
 fayrnesse—fayrenesse  
 999 clere—cleer  
 calme—kalm

1000 wynde—wynd  
 1001 whelweþ—welueeth  
 1002 [zeelde]—from C.  
 1003, 1004 wilt þou—wolthow  
 1003 þan—thanne  
 trublyng—towmblyng  
 1004 in flittyng—on flet-  
 1006 It is—is it [tyng  
 1008 no—ne  
 stable—estable

1008 soþe—soth  
 Ne I may—Ne I ne may  
 1009 seine—seyn  
 1011 a—omitted  
 gretly—gretely  
 1012 aduersitees—aduersyte  
 1013 most—mooste  
 1014 abaist—abyest  
 1015 tourment—trinent  
 fals[e]—false

fully blamen ne aretten to þinges. as who seiþ for þou  
hast ȝitte many habundaunces of þinges. ¶ *Textus.*

1018 For al be it so þat þe ydal name of auenterouse wele-  
fulnessse moeueþ þe now. it is leueful þat þou rekene  
with me of how many[e] þinges þou hast ȝit plentee.

What you  
esteemed most  
precious in your  
happy days, you  
still retain,

¶ And þerfore yif þat pilke þing þat þou haddest for  
most precious in alle þi rycchesse of fortune be kept

1023 to þe by þe grace of god vnwemmed *and* vndefouled.

and ought there-  
fore not to com-  
plain.

Mayst þou þan pleyne ryȝtfully vpon þe myschief of for-  
tune. syn þou hast ȝit þi best[e] þinges. ¶ Certys ȝit

1026 lyueþ in goode poynt pilke precious honour of man-

Symmachus, dear  
to you as life,

kynde. ¶ Symacus þi wyues fadir whiche þat is a  
man maked al of sapience *and* of vertue. þe whiche

1029 man þou woldest b[i]en redely wiþ þe pris of þin owen

is safe and in  
health.

lijf. he byweyleþ þe wronges þat men don to þee. *and*  
not for hym self. for he liueþ in sykernesse of any

Your wife  
Rusticiana is also  
alive,

þentence put azeins hym. ¶ And ȝit lyueþ þi wif þat  
is attempre of witte *and* passyng oþer women in clennes

1034 of chastitee. and for I wol closen shortly her bountes

and bewails her  
separation from  
you.

she is lyke to hir fadir. I telle þe welle þat she lyueþ  
loop of hir life. *and* kepþ to þee oonly hir goost. *and*

is al maat *and* ouer-comen by wepyng *and* sorwe for

1038 desire of þe ¶ In þe whiche þing only I mot graunten

Why need I men-  
tion your two  
sons, in whom so  
much of the wit

[\* fol. 11.]  
and spirit of their  
sire and grand-  
sire doth shine?

And since it is  
the chief care of  
man to preserve  
life; you are still

þat þi welefulnessse is amenused. ¶ What shal I seyn  
eke of þi two sones conseilours of whiche as of chil-  
dren of hir age þer shineþ \*þe lyknesse of þe witte of

hir fadir *and* of hir eldefadir. and siþen þe souereyn  
cure of alle mortel folke is to sauen hir owen lyues.

¶ O how weleful art þou þouȝ þou knowe þi goodes.

1016 seiþ—MS. seipe, C. seyþ  
1017 ȝitte—yit  
1019 leueful—leefful  
1020 many[e] þinges—manye  
grete thinges  
1022 alle—al  
1023 þe by—the yit by  
1024 myschief—meschef  
1025 best[e]—beste  
1026 lyueþ—leueth  
goode—good  
1027 whiche—which  
1028 al—alle

1028 of (2)—omitted  
1029 b[i]en—byen  
owen—owne  
1030 byweyleþ—bewayleth  
don—MS. done, C. don  
1031 liueþ—leueth  
1033 witte—wyt  
women—wymmen  
1034 shortly—shortely  
1035 lyke—lik  
welle—wel  
1036 hir life—this lyf  
1037 maat—maad

1038 whiche—weche  
1039 amenused—amenysed  
seyn—(MS. seyne) seyn  
1041 lyknesse—lykenesse  
witte—wyt  
1042 and (1)—or  
eldefadir—eldyr fadyr  
siþen—syn  
1043 folke—folk  
1044 art þou þouȝ—arthow  
yif

¶ But ȝitte ben þer þinges dwellyng to þe wardes þat no man douteþ þat þei ne ben more derworþe to þe þen þine owen lijf. ¶ And forþi drie þi teres for ȝitte nys nat eueriche fortune al hateful to þe warde. ne ouer greet tempest haþ nat ȝit fallen vpon þe. whan þat þin ancre cluie fast[e] þat neiþer wole suffre þe comfort of þis 1050 tyme present. ne þe hope of tyme comynge to passen ne to fallen. ¶ And I preie *quod* I þat fast[e] mot[en] þei holden. ¶ For whiles þat þei halden. how so euere þat þinges ben. I shal wel fieten furþe and eschafen. 1054

¶ But þou mayst wel seen how greet[e] apparailles *and* aray þat me lakkeþ þat ben passed away fro me. ¶ I haue sumwhat auauunced *and* forþered þe *quod* she. if þat þou anoie nat or forþenke nat of al þi fortune. As who seip. ¶ I haue somwhat comforted þe so þat þou tempest nat þe þus wiþ al þi fortune. syn þou hast ȝit þi best[e] þinges. ¶ But I may nat suffre þin delices. þat pleinst so wepyng. *and* anguissous for þat 1062 oþer lakkeþ somwhat to þi welefulnesse. ¶ For what man is so sad or of so perfit welefulnesse. þat he ne stryueþ or pleyneþ on some half azeine þe qualitee of 1065 his estat. ¶ For whi ful anguissous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. ¶ For eyþer it comeþ al to gidre to a wyzt. or ellys it lasteþ not perpetuely. ¶ For som man haþ grete rycchesse. but he is ashamed of hys vngentil lynage. *and* som man is renowned of noblesse of kynrede. but he is enclosed in so grete angre for nede of þinges. þat hym were leuer þat he were vnknowe. and som man habundeþ boþe in rychesse *and* noblesse. but ȝit he bywaileþ hys chast[e]

most happy in the possession of blessings which all men value more than life. Dry up thy tears, thou hast still present comfort and hope of future felicity.

B. I hope these will never fail me.

But do you not see how low I am fallen?

P. I should think that I had made progress if you did not repine so at your fate.

It grieues me to hear you complain while you possess so many comforts.

Every one, however happy, has something to complain of.

The condition of human enjoyment is anxious; for either it comes not all at once, or makes no long stay when it does come.

One man is very wealthy, but his birth is obscure.

Another is conspicuous for nobility of descent, but is surrounded by indigence.

A third is blest with both ad-

1045 *But ȝitte*—for yit  
*dwellyng*—dwellyd  
*wardes*—ward  
1046 *þat*—than  
*derworþe*—dereworthe  
*ben þine*—than thin  
1047 *ȝitte*—yit  
1049 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*þin*—thyne  
1050 *cluie fast[e]*—cleuen  
faste  
wole *suffre*—wolen suffren

1052 *fallen*—faylen  
1053 *fast[e] mot[en]*—faste  
moten  
1053 *holden*—halden  
1054 *furþe*—forth  
1055 *mayst*—mayste  
*greet[e]*—grete  
1058 *forþenke*—forthinke  
1061 *best[e]*—beste  
*suffre þin*—suffren thi  
1063 *oþer*—ther  
1064 *perfit*—parfyt

1065 *or*—*and*  
*some half azeine*—som  
halue ayein  
1067 *manes*—mannes  
*comeþ al*—comth nat al  
1068 *lasteþ*—last  
*perpetuely*—perpetue  
1069 *rycchesse*—Rychesses  
1070 *renomed*—renowned  
1072 *angre for*—Angwysse  
*leuer*—leuere [of  
1074 *chast[e]*—caste

vantages, but is unmarried.

This man is happy in a wife, but is childless, while that other man has the joy of children, but is mortified by their evil ways.

Thus we see that no man can agree easily with the state of his fortune.

1082 þat vnassaieþ he ne wot not or ellys he dredip þat he hæp assaied. ¶ And adde þis also þat euery weleful

The senses of the happy are refined and delicate, and they are impatient if anything is untoward.

The happiness of the most fortunate depends on trifles.

1089 blisfulnesse fro hem þat ben most fortunat. ¶ How many men trowest þou wolde demen hem self to ben almost in heuene yif þei myzten atteyne to þe leest[e] partie of þe remenaunt of þi fortune. ¶ Þis same place

How many would think themselves in heaven if they had only a part of the remnant of thy fortune!

Thy miseries proceed from the thought that thou art miserable.

Every lot may be happy to the man who bears his condition with equanimity and courage.

þat þou clepist exil is contre to hem þat enhabiten here. and forþi. Noþing wrecched. but whan þou wenest it ¶ As who seip. þou3 þi self ne no wyzt ellys nys no wrecche but whan he wenep hym self a

1097 wrecche by reputacioun of his corage.

## CONTRAQUE.

1098 And aȝeinewarde al fortune is blisful to a man by þe agreablete or by þe egalite of hym þat suffreþ it.

When patience is lost then a change of state is desired.

¶ What man is þat. þat is so weleful þat nolde chaungen his estat whan he hæp lorn pacience. þe swetnesse of

1102 mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wip many[e] bitternesses.

1075, 1076 hæp—MS. hæpe  
1076 married—ymaryed  
his—hise  
1077 ricchesse—Rychesses  
heires—eyres  
folk—foolkys  
1080 þer—þer ne  
1081 mest—omitted  
1082 vnassaieþ—vnassaied  
wot—MS. wote, C. wot

1083, 1084 hæp—MS. hæpe  
1084 wel—ful  
1085 fallen—byfalle  
wille—wyl  
1086 none—non  
an-oone—Anon  
proue—throwen  
1087 adoüne—adoun  
1089 woldo—wolden  
1085 it—hyt

1095 who—ho  
1096 no—a  
1098 aȝeinewarde al—ayein-ward alle  
1099 it—hyt  
1101 whan—what  
hæp—MS. hæpe  
lorn—MS. lorne, C. lost  
1102 yspranid—spraynyd  
bitternesses—beternesses

þe whiche welefulnesse al þouȝ it seme swete *and* ioyeful to hym þat vseþ it. ȝit may it not be wiþ-helden þat it ne goþ away whan it wol. ¶ þan is it wel sen how wrecched is þe blisfulnesse of mortel þinges. þat neiþer it dwelliþ perpetuel wiþ hem þat euery fortune receyuen agreablye or egaly. ¶ Ne it ne deliteþ not in al. to hem þat ben anguissous. ¶ O ye mortel folkes what seke \*ȝe þan blisfulnesse oute of ȝoure self. whiche þat is put in ȝoure self. *Errorr and folie confoundeþ ȝow* ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. þe poynt of souereyne blisfulnesse. Is per any þing to þe more preciouſe þan pi self ¶ þou wilt answeſe nay. ¶ þan if it so be þat þou art myȝty ouer pi self þat is to seyn by tranquillitee of pi soule. þan hast þou þing in pi power þat þou noldest neuer lesen. ne fortune may nat by-nyme it þe. 1117 *and* þat þou mayst knowe þat blisfulnesse [ne] may nat standen in þinges þat ben fortunous *and* temperel. ¶ Now vnderstonde *and* gadir it to gidir þus yif blisfulnesse be þe souereyne goode of nature þat 1121 liueþ by resoun ¶ Ne pilke þing nis nat souereyne goode þat may be taken away in any wyse. for more worpi þing *and* more digne is pilke þing þat may nat be taken away. ¶ þan shewiþ it wele þat þe vnstablesse of fortune may nat attayne to receyue verray blisfulnes. ¶ And ȝit more ouer. ¶ What man þat pis tounblyng welefulnesse leediþ. eiþer he woot þat [it] is chaungeable. or ellis he woot it nat. ¶ And yif he woot it not. what blisful fortune may þe be in þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce. and yif he woot þat it is chaungeable. he mot alwey ben adrad þat he ne lese þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may leesen

How much is human felicity embittered!

It will not stay with those that endure their lot with equanimity, nor bring comfort to anxious minds.

1109

Why then, O [\* fol. 11 b.] mortals, do ye seek abroad for that felicity which is to be found within yourselves? Nothing is more precious than thyself.

If thou hast command over thyself, Fortune cannot deprive thee of it.

Happiness does not consist in things transitory.

If happiness be the supreme good of nature, then that thing cannot be it which can be withdrawn from us.

Instability of fortune is not susceptible of true happiness.

He who is led by fading felicity, either knows that it is changeable or does not know it.

If he knows it not, what happiness has he in the blindness of his ignorance?

If he knows it is fleeting he must be afraid of losing

1104 *hym*—hem  
it—hyt  
be—ben  
1105 *goþ*—MS. geþe  
wool—woole  
sen—MS. sene  
1107 *dwelliþ*—dureth  
1109 *folkes*—folke  
1110 *oute*—owt

1112 *shortly*—shortely  
1114 *wilt*—MS. wylte, C. wolt  
ȝ—yif  
1117 *by-nyme*—be-neme  
1118 *blisfulnesse* [ne] —  
blyssfulnesse ne  
1120 *to gidir*—to gidere  
1121, 1122 *souereyne goode*—  
souereyn good

1125 *wole*—wel  
1126 *receyue*—reseyuen  
1129 [it]—from C.  
it—hyt  
1130 *be*—ben  
1131 *blyndenesse* — blynd-  
nesse



it, and this fear  
will not suffer  
him to be happy.

it. ¶ As whoo seiþ he mot ben alwey agast lest he  
leese þat he wot wel he may leese. ¶ For whiche þe  
1136 continuel drede þat he haþ ne suffriþ hym nat to ben  
weleful. ¶ Or ellys yif he leese it he wene to be  
dispiſed *and* forleten hit. ¶ Certis eke þat is a ful  
lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is  
1140 loost. ¶ þat is to seyne þat men don no more force.  
of þe lost þan of þe hauynge. ¶ And for as myche as  
þou þi self art he to whom it haþ ben shewid *and* proued  
by ful many[e] demonstraciouns. as I woot wel þat þe  
soules of men ne mowen nat dien in no wise. and eke  
syn it is clere. *and* certeyne þat fortunous welefulnesse  
endip by þe deep of þe body. ¶ It may nat ben doutid

Since thou art  
convinced of the  
soul's im-  
mortality, thou  
canst not doubt  
that if death puts  
an end to human  
felicity, that all  
men when they  
die, are plunged  
into the depths of  
misery.

But we know that  
many have  
sought to obtain  
felicity,  
by undergoing  
not only death,  
but pains and  
torments.  
How then can  
this present life  
make men truly  
happy, since  
when it is ended  
they do not be-  
come miserable?

1147 þat yif þat deep may take away blysfulnesse þat al þe  
kynde of mortal þingus ne descendip in to wrecched-  
nesse by þe ende of þe deep. ¶ And syn we knowen  
wel þat many a man haþ souzt þe fruit of blisfulnesse  
nat only wiþ suffryng of deep. but eke wiþ suffryng of  
peynes *and* tourmentes. how myzt[e] þan þis present  
lijf make men blisful. syn þat whanne þilke self[e]  
lijf is endid. it ne makeþ folk no wrecches.

\* MS. ualet.

QUISQUIS UOLET \* PERHENNEM CAUTUS.

[The ferthe  
metur.]

He who would  
have a stable and  
lasting seat must  
not build upon  
lofty hills; nor  
upon the sands,  
if he would escape  
the violence of  
winds and waves.

1160 What maner man stable *and* war þat wil founden hym  
a perdurable sete *and* ne wil not be cast doune  
wiþ þe loude blastes of þe wynde Eurus. *and* wil dispise  
þe see manassyng wiþ floodes ¶ Lat hym eschewe to  
bilde on þe cop of þe mountayngne. or in þe moyste  
sandis. ¶ For þe fel[le] wynde auster tormentep þe cop  
of þe mountayngne wiþ alle his strengþes. ¶ *and* þe

1134 *it*—hyt  
1135 *seiþ*—MS. seiþe, C. seyth  
1136 *wot*—MS. wote, C. wot  
1136 *leese* (2)—leese it  
1136 *whiche*—which  
1136 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
1137 *ellys*—omitted  
1138 *wene*—weneth  
1138 *hit*—omitted  
1139 *goode*—good  
1139 *born*—MS. borne, C. born  
1139 *her[e]*—herte

1140 *seyne*—seyn  
1140 *don*—MS. done, C. do  
1140 *force*—fors  
1142 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
1143 *many[e]*—manye  
1144 *mowen*—mowe  
1144 *dien*—deyen  
1145 *clere*—cleer  
1145 *certeyne*—certeyn  
1147 *al*—alle  
1160 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
1160 *fruit*—frut

1162 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
1163 *make*—maken  
1163 *self[e]*—selue  
1165, 1166, 1167 *wil*—wole  
1166 *be cast*—MS. be caste,  
C. ben cast  
1167 *wynde*—wynd  
1168 *eschewe*—eschewen  
1160 *fel[le]*—felle  
1161 *his*—hise

lowe see sandes refuse to beren þe heuy wey3te. *and* 1162

forþi yif þou wolt flee þe perilous auenture þat is to  
seine of þe worlde ¶ Hauē mynde certeynly to ficchyn  
þi house of a myrie site in a lowe stooone. ¶ For al

If thou wilt flee  
perilous fortuna,  
lay thy founda-  
tion upon the  
firmer stone, so  
that thou mayst  
grow old in thy  
stronghold.

þou3 þe wynde troubling þe see þondre wiþ ouere-  
þrowynges ¶ þou þat art put in quiete *and* welful by

strengþe of þi palys shalt leden a cleer age. scornynge

þe wodenesses and þe Ires of þe eir.

1169

## SET CUM RACIONUM IAM IN TE.

**B**ut for as moche as þe noryssinges of my resouns [The fyfthe prose.]

descenden now in to þe. I trowe it were tyme to  
vsen a litel strenger medicynes. ¶ Now vndirstonde

It is now time to  
use stronger me-  
dicines, since  
lighter remedies  
have taken effect.  
What is there in  
the gifts of For-  
tune that is not  
vile and despic-  
able? [\* fol. 12.]

here al were it so þat þe 3iftis of fortune nar[e] nat

brutel ne transitorie. what is þer in hem þat may be

þine \*in any tyme. or ellis þat it nys foule if þat it be

considered *and* lokid þerfitely. ¶ Richesse ben þei

1176

precious by þe nature of hem self. or ellys by þe

Are riches  
precious in them-  
selves, or in men's  
estimation?

nature of þe. What is most worþi of rychesse. is it

nat golde or my3t of moneye assembled. ¶ Certis

What is most  
precious in them,  
quantity or  
quality?

þilke golde *and* þilke moneye shineþ *and* 3eueþ better

Bounty is more  
glorious than  
niggardliness.

renoun to hem þat dispenden it. þen to þilke folke þat

mokeren it. For auarice makeþ alwey mokeres to be

Avarice is always  
hateful, while  
liberality is  
praise-worthy.

hated. *and* largesse makeþ folke clere of renoun

¶ For syn þat swiche þing as is transfered from o

man to an oper ne may nat dwellen wiþ no man. 1185

Certis þan is þilke moneye precious. whan it is trans-

Money cannot be  
more precious  
than when it is  
dispensed liber-  
ally to others.

lated in to oper folk. *and* stynted to ben had by

vsage of large 3euyng of hym þat haþ 3euen it. *and*

also yif al þe moneye þat is ouer-al in þe world were

If one man's cof-  
fers contained all

1162 *lowe*—lavse

see—omitted

refuse—refusen

1163 *wey3te*—wyhte1164 *flee*—fleen1165 *seine*—seyen1166 *þi*—thin1167 *lowe stooone*—lowh stoon1168 *welful*—weleful1169 *wodenesses*—wood-

nesses

1172 *strenger*—strengers

vndirstonde—vndyrstond

1173 *nar[e]*—ne weere1174 *be þine*—ben thyn1175 *foule*—fowl1176 *Richesse*—Rychessis1178 *rychesse*—rychesses1179, 1180 *golde*—gold1180 *better*—betere1181 *þen*—thanne1182 *mokeres*—mokereres1183 *folke clere*—folk cler1184 *swiche*—swich

from—fram

1187 *stynted*—stenteth1188 *haþ*—MS. haþe1189 *world*—worlde

the money in the world, every one else would be in want of it.

1192 pat is to seyn wip-oute amenusynge fulfilleþ to gyder

Riches cannot be dispensed without diminution.

1195 ussying ¶ And whan þei ben apassed. nedys þei maken

O the poverty of riches, that cannot be enjoyed by many at the same time, nor can be possessed by one without impoverishing others!

1200 of gemmes þat I clepe preciouſe stones. draweþ it nat

The beauty of precious stones consists only in their brightness, wherefore I marvel that men admire that which is motionless, lifeless, and irrational.

1207 ioynture of soule and body þat by ryzt myzt[e] semen a faire creature to hym þat hap a soule of resoun.

Precious stones are indeed the workmanship of the Creator, but their beauty is infinitely below the excellency of man's nature.

1213 þei han not desserued by no weye þat 3e shullen

Doth the beauty of the field delight thee?

B. Why should it not? for it is a beautiful part of a beautiful whole.

merueylen on hem. ¶ And þe beaute of feeldes deliteþ it nat mychel vnto 3ow. Boyce. ¶ Whi sholde it nat deliten vs. syn þat it is a ryzt fayr porcioun of þe ryzt fair werk. þat is to seyn of þis worlde. ¶ And ryzt so ben we gladed somtyme of þe face of þe see whan it is clere. And also merueylen we on þe heuene and

1190 *al—alle*  
1191 *al hool—omitted*  
1193 *myche folke—moche folke*  
*rychesse—rycheses*  
1194 *myche—moche*  
1196 *forgon—MS. forgone*  
1197 *þise—this*  
*rycheses—rychesse*  
[*ne*—from O.  
1198 *on—o*  
1199 *wip-oute—with-owten*

1199 *al—alle*  
*folke—folke*  
1200 *precious—presyous*  
1201 *in—omitted*  
*wardo—ward*  
*seyne—seyn*  
1202 *beaute (l)—beautes*  
*For—but*  
1203 *in—in the*  
1204 *whiche—which*  
1207 *ioynture—ioyngture*  
1208 *fairo—fayr*

1208 *hap—MS. hape*  
1210 *lasto—last*  
*worlde—world*  
1212 *myche—mochel*  
1213 *desserued—MS. desseyued, O. desseruyd*  
*weye—wey*  
*shullen—sholden*  
1215 *mychel—mochel*  
1217 *fayr werk—fayre werke*  
*worlde—world*  
1219 *clere—cler*

on þe sterres. *and* on þe sonne. *and* on þe mone. *Philosophie.* ¶ Apperteineþ quod she any of pilke pinges to þe. whi darst þou glorifie þe in þe shynynge of any swiche pinges. Art þou distingwed *and* embelised by þe spryngyng floures of þe first somer sesoun. or swellip þi plente in fruytes of somer. whi art þou rauyshed wip ydel ioies. why embracest þou straunge goodes as þei weren pine. Fortune shal neuer maken þat swiche pinges ben pine þat nature of pinges maked foreyne fro þe. ¶ Syche is þat wip-uten doute þe fruytes of þe erpe owen to ben on þe norssinge of bestes. ¶ And if þou wilt fulfille þi nede after þat it suffiseþ to nature þan is it no nede þat þou seke after þe superfluite of fortune. ¶ For wip ful fewe pinges *and with* ful lytel ping nature halt hire appaied. *and* yif þou wilt achoken þe fullillyng of nature wip superfluites ¶ Certys pilke pinges þat þou wilt presten or pouren in to nature shullen ben vnioyeful to þe or ellis anoies. ¶ Wenest þou eke þat it be a fair pinge to shine wip dyuerse cloping. of whiche cloping yif þe beaute be agreable to loken vpon. I wol merueylen on þe nature of þe matere of pilke cloþes. or ellys on þe werkeman þat wrouzt[e] hem. but al so a longe route of meyne. makip þat a blisful \*man. þe whiche seruantes yif þei ben vicioüs of condiciouns it is a greet charge *and* a destruccioun to þe house. *and* a greet enmye to þe lorde hym self ¶ And yif þei ben goode men how shal straung[e] or foreyne goodenes ben put in þe noumbre of þi rychesse. so þat by alle þise forseide pinges. it is clerly shewed þat neuer none of pilke pinges þat þou accoumptedest for þin goodes nas nat þi goode. ¶ In þe whiche pinges yif þer be no beaute to ben desired.

as well as the sun, moon, and stars.  
P. Do these things concern thee?  
darest thou glory in them?

1223

Do the flowers adorn you with their variety?  
Why embracest thou things wherein thou hast no property?  
Fortune can never make that thine which the nature of things forbids to be so.  
The fruits of the earth are designed for the support of beasts.

If you seek only the necessities of nature, the affluence of Fortune will be useless.  
Nature is content with a little, and superfluity will be both disagreeable and hurtful.

1236

Does it add to a man's worth to shine in variety of costly clothing?  
The things really to be admired are the beauty of the stuff or the workmanship of it.  
Doth a great retinue make thee happy?  
If thy servants be vicious, they are [\* fol. 12 b.] a great burden to the house, and pernicious enemies to the master of it.  
If they be good, why should the probity of others be put to thy account?  
Upon the whole, then, none of those enjoyments which thou didst consider as thy own did ever properly belong to thee.

1223 *darst þou glorifie* —  
darsthow gloryfyen  
1225 *in*—in the  
1229 *Syche*—Soth  
1230 *on*—to  
1231, 1235, 1237 *wilt*—wolt

1238 *shullen*—shollen  
1239 *fair*—fayre  
1240 *whiche*—which  
1242 *werkeman*—werkman  
1246 *house*—hows  
*lorde*—lord

1248 *goodenes*—goodnesse  
1250 *shewed*—I-shewyd  
*none*—oun  
1251 *þin*—thine  
*goode*—good

If they be not desirable, why shouldst thou grieve for the loss of them?

If they are fair by nature, what is that to thee? They would be equally agreeable whether thine or not.

They are not to be reckoned precious because they are counted amongst thy goods, but because they seemed so before thou didst desire to possess them.

What, then, is it we so clamorously demand of

Fortune?

Is it to drive

away indigence

by abundance?

But the very

reverse of this

happens, for there

is need of many

helps to keep a

variety of valuable

goods. 1268

They want most

things who have

the most.

They want the

fewest who

measure their

abundance by the

necessities of

nature, and not

by the superfluity

of their desires.

Is there no good

planted within

ourselves, that we

are obliged to go

abroad to seek it?

Are things so

changed and in-

verted, that god-

like man should

think that he has

no other worth

but what he de-

rides from the

possession of in-

animate objects?

Inferior things

are satisfied with

their own endow-

ments, while man

(the image of

God) seeks to

adorn his nature

whi sholdest þou be sory yif þou leese hem. or whi sholdest þou reioysen þe to holden hem. ¶ For if þei ben fair of hire owen kynde. what apperteneþ þat to þe. for as wel sholde þei han ben faire by hem self. þouȝ þei weren departid from alle þin rycchesse. ¶ For why faire ne precioüs ne weren þei nat. for þat þei comen amonges þi rycchesse. but for þei semeden fair and precious. þefore þou haddest leuer rekene hem amonges þi rycchesse. but what desirest þou of fortune wiþ so greet a noyse and wiþ so greet a fare ¶ I trowe þou seke to dryue away nede wiþ habundaunce of pinges. ¶ But certys it turneþ to ȝow al in þe contrarie. for whi certys it nedip of ful many[e] helpynges to kepen þe dyuersite of preciouſe ostelmentȝ. and soþe it is þat of many[e] pinges han þei nede þat many[e] pinges han. and aȝeyneward of litel nedip hem þat mesuren hir fille after þe nede of kynde and nat after þe outrage of couetyse ¶ Is it þan so þat ye men ne han no propre goode. I-set in ȝow. For whiche ȝe moten seken outwardes ȝoure goodes in foreine and subgit pinges. ¶ So is þan þe condicioun of pinges turned vpso doun. þat a man þat is a de-vyne beest by merit of hys resoun. pinkeþ þat hym self nys neyþer fair ne noble. but if it be þoruȝ possessioun of ostelmentes. þat ne han no soules. ¶ And certys al oþer pinges ben appaied of hire owen beautes. but ȝe men þat ben semblable to god by ȝoure resonable þouȝt desiren to apparaille ȝoure excellent kynde of þe lowest[e] pinges. ne ȝe ne vndirstonde nat how gret a wrong ȝe don to ȝoure creatour. for he wolde þat man kynde were moost worpi and noble of

1255 fair—fayre

hire owen—hyr owne

1256 sholde—sholden

self—selue

1257 þin rycchesse—thyne

ryccheses

1259 amonges—amonge

1259, 1261 rycchesse—Rych-

esses

1259 fair—fayre

1260 leuer rekene—leuere

rekne

1262 greet (2)—grete

1265, 1267 many[e]—manye

1267 soþe—soth

1272 outwardes—owtward

1276 fair—fayre

if—yif

1278 hire owen—hir owne

1281 ne (2)—omitted

vndirstonde—vndyrstond-

yn

1282 gret—MS. grete, C. gret

any oþer erþely þinges. and 3e þresten adoun 3oure dignitees by-neþen þe lowest[e] þinges. ¶ For if þat al þe good of euery þing be more *precious* þan is þilk þing whos þat þe good is. syn 3e demen þat þe foulest[e] þinges ben 3oure goodes. þanne summytten 3e and putten 3oure self vndir þo foulest[e] þinges by 3oure estimacioun. ¶ And certis þis bitidip nat wip out 3oure desert. For certys swiche is þe condicioun of al man kynde þat oonly whan it hap knowyng of it self. þan passeþ it in noblesse alle oþer þinges. and whan it forletip þe knowyng of it self. þan it is brouȝt byneþen alle beestes. ¶ For-why alle oþer [leuyng] beestes han of kynde to knowe not hem self. but whan þat men leten þe knowyng of hem self. it comeþ hem of vice. but how brode sheweþ þe *error* and þe folie of 3ow men þat wenen þat ony þing may ben apparailled wip straunge apparaillement; ¶ but for-soþe þat may nat be don. for yif a wyȝt shyneþ wip þinges þat ben put to hym. as þus. yif þilke þinges shynen wip whiche a man is apparailled. ¶ Certis þilke þinges ben commendid and *praised* wip whiche he is apparailled. ¶ But napeles þe þing þat is couered and wrapped vndir þat dwelleþ in his filþe. and I denye þat þilke þing be good þat anoyeþ hym þat hap it. ¶ Gabbe I of þis. þou wolt seye nay. ¶ Certys rycchesse han anoyed ful ofte hem þat han þe rycchesse. ¶ Syn þat euery wicked shrew and for hys wickednesse þe more gredy aftir oþer folkes rycchesse wher so euer it be in any place. be it golde or

with things infinitely below him, not understanding how much he dishonours his Maker. God intended man to excel all earthly creatures, yet you debase your dignity and prerogative below the lowest beings. In placing your happiness in despicable trifles, you acknowledge yourselves of less value than these trifles, and well do you merit to be so esteemed. Man only excels other creatures when he knows himself. When he ceases to do so, he sinks below beasts.

1297

Ignorance is natural to beasts, but in men it is unnatural and criminal.

How weak an error is it to believe that anything foreign to your nature can be an ornament to it.

If a thing appear beautiful on account of its external embellishments, we admire and praise those embellishments alone. The thing covered still continues in its natural impurity.

I deny that to be a good which is hurtful to its owner.

Am I deceived in this? You will say no; for riches have often hurt their possessors. Every wicked man desires

1284 *oþer erþely* — oothre wordly  
1285 *þresten* — threste

1285 *by-neþen* — by-nethe  
1286 *if* — yif

1286 *good* — MS. goode, C. good

1287 *þing* — thinge  
1287 *precious* — presyos

1287 *þilk þing* — þilke thinge  
1287 *þe* (2) — tho

1288 *summytten* — submitten  
1289 *self* — seluen

1289 *foulest[e]* — fowleste

1290 *bitidip* — tydeth

1291 *out* — owte

1291 *desert* — desertes

1292 *al* — alle

1293 *self* — selue

1294 *it is* — is it

1296 [*leuyng*] — from C.

1297 *þat* — omitted

1298 *comeþ* — comth

1299 *þing* — thinge

1302 *put* — MS. putte, C. put

1303 *whiche* — which

1306 *þilþe* — felthe

1307 *þing* — thinge

1307 *good* — MS. goode, C. good

1308 *hap* — MS. hape

1309 *rycchesse* — Rychesses

1310 *þe* — tho

1310 *rycchesse* — Rychesses

1310 *shrew* — shrewe

1311 *rycchesse* — rychesses

1312 *golde* — gold

[\* fol. 13.]  
another's wealth,  
and esteems him  
alone happy who  
is in possession  
of riches.  
You, therefore,  
who now so much  
dread the instru-  
ments of assassi-  
nation, if you had  
been born a poor  
wayfaring man,  
might, with an  
empty purse,  
have sung in the  
face of robbers.  
O the transcen-  
dent felicity of  
riches! No  
sooner have you  
obtained them,  
than you cease to  
be secure.

precious stones. *and* wenip hym \*only most worpi pat  
hap hem ¶ pou þan þat so besy dredest now þe swerde  
*and* þe spere. yif pou haddest entred in þe pape of þis  
lijf a voide wayfaryng man. þan woldest pou syng[e]  
by-fore þe þeef. ¶ As who seiþ a poure man þat bereþ  
no rycchesse on hym by þe weye. may boldly syng[e]  
byforne þeues. for he hap nat wher-of to ben robbed.  
¶ O preciouſe *and* ryzt clere is þe blyſfulnesse of  
mortal rycchesse. þat whan þou hast geten it. þan hast  
pou lorn þi syke[r]nesse.

## FELIX IN MIRUM PRIOR ETAS.

[The fyfthe  
metur.]  
Happy was the  
first age of men.  
They were con-  
tented with what  
the faithful earth  
produced.  
With acorns they  
satisfied their  
hunger.  
They knew not  
Hypocras nor  
Hydromel.

They did not dye  
the Serian flece  
in Tyrian purple.

Blyſful was þe first age of men. þei helden hem  
apaid wiþ þe metes þat þe trewe erþes brouzten  
furþe. ¶ þei ne destroyed[e] ne desceyued[e] not hem  
self wiþ outrage. ¶ þei weren wont lyztly to slaken  
her hunger at euene wiþ acornes of okes ¶ þei ne  
coupe nat medle þe ȝift of bacus to þe clere hony.  
þat is to seyn. þei coupe make no piment of clarre.  
ne þei coupe nat medle þe briȝt[e] flies of þe contre  
of siriens wiþ þe venym of tirie. þis is to seyne. þei

1332 coupe nat dien white flies of sirien contre wiþ þe  
blode of a manar shelfysshe. þat men fynden in tyrie.  
wiþ whiche blode men deien purper. ¶ þei slepen  
holesom slepes vpon þe gras. and dronken of þe ryn-  
nyng watres. *and* laien vndir þe shadowe of þe heyȝe  
pyne trees. ¶ Ne no gest ne no straunger [ne] karf  
ȝit þe heyȝe see wiþ oores or wiþ shippes. ne þei ne

They slept upon  
the grass, and  
drank of the  
running stream,  
and reclined  
under the shadow  
of the tall pine.  
No man yet  
ploughed the deep,  
nor did the mer-  
chant traffick with  
foreign shores.

1314 hap—MS. hape, C. hat  
besy—bysy  
swerde—sword  
1315 pape—paath  
1316 wayfaryng—wayferynge  
syng[e]—syng  
1317 by-fore—by-forn  
seiþ—MS. seiþe, C. seyth  
poure—pore  
bereþ—berth  
1318 boldly syng[e]—boldely  
syng  
1319 hap—MS. hape  
1320 preciouſe—precyos  
clere—cler  
1321 rycchesse—rychesses

1322 lorn—MS. lorne, C. lorn  
1324 erþes—feeldes  
1325 furþe—forth  
destroyed[e]—dystroyede  
1327 her—hyr  
at—MS. as, C. at  
euene—euen  
1328 coupe—cowde  
medle—medly  
ȝift—yifte  
clere—cleer  
1329 coupe—cowde  
of—nor  
1330 coupe—cowde  
briȝt[e] flies—bryhte fleeces  
1331 siriens—Seryens

1331 seyne—seyn  
1332 coupe—cowde  
dien—deyen  
flies—flees  
1333 blode—blood  
shelfysshe—shyllefyssh  
1334 blode—blood  
1335 holesom—holsum  
rynnnyng watres—reun-  
nyng watres  
shadowe—shadwes  
heyȝe—heye  
1337 pyne—pyu  
no (2)—omitted  
[ne]—from C.  
karf—karue

hadden seyne ȝitte none newe strondes to leden mer- 1339  
chaundyse in to dyuerse contres. ¶ þo weren þe cruel  
clariouns ful whist *and* ful stille. ne blode yshed by  
egre hate ne hadde nat deied ȝit armurers. for wherto  
or whiche woodenesse of enmys wolde first moeuen  
armes. whan þei seien cruel woundes ne none medes  
ben of blood yshad ¶ I wolde þat oure tymes sholde  
turne aȝeyne to þe oolde maneres. ¶ But þe anguissous  
loue of hauyng brennep in folke moore cruely þan þe  
fijr of þe Mountaigne of Ethna þat euer brennep.  
¶ Allas what was he þat first dalf vp þe gobets or  
þe weyȝtys of gold couered vnder erpe. *and* þe precious  
stones þat wolden han ben hid. he dalf vp precious  
perils. þat is to seyne þat he þat hem first vp dalf. he  
dalf vp a precious peril. for-whi. for þe preciousnesse  
of swyche hap many man ben in peril.

The warlike  
trumpet was  
hushed and still.  
Bloodahed had  
not yet arisen  
through hateful  
quarrels.  
Nothing could  
stimulate their  
rage to engage in  
war, when they  
saw that wounds  
and scars were  
the only needs.  
O that those days  
would come  
again!  
The thirst of  
wealth torments  
all; it rages more  
fiercely than  
Ætna's fires.  
Cursed be the  
wretch who first  
brought gold to  
light.

1352

It has since  
proved perilous  
to many a man.

## QUID AUTEM DE DIGNITATIBUS ET CETERA.

But what shal I seyne of dignitees *and* of powers.  
þe whiche [ye] men þat neiþer knowen verray dig-  
nitee ne verray power areyssen hem as heye as þe  
heuene. þe whiche dignitees *and* powers yif þei come  
to any wicked man þei don [as] greet[e] damages *and*  
distruccioun as doþ þe flamme of þe Mountaigne  
Ethna whan þe flamme wit walwip vp ne no deluge  
ne doþ so cruel harmes. ¶ Certys ye remembriþ wel  
as I trowe þat pilke dignitee þat men clepiþ þe em-  
perie of consulers þe whiche þat somtyme was by-  
gynnyng of freedom. ¶ ȝoure eldres coueiteden to han  
don a-way þat dignitee for þe pride of þe conseilers.

[The sixte prose.]  
But why should I  
discourse of dig-  
nities and powers  
which (though  
you are ignorant  
of true honour  
and real power)  
you extol to the  
skies?  
When they fall  
to the lot of a  
wicked man, they  
produce greater  
calamities than  
the flaming  
eruption of Ætna,  
or the most im-  
petuous deluge.  
You remember  
that your an-  
cestors desired to  
abolish the Con-  
sular government  
(the commence-  
ment of the  
Roman liberty),

1339 *hadden seyne ȝitte*—  
hadde seyn ȝit  
1341 *whist*—hust  
*blode yshed*—blod I-shad  
1343 *whiche woodenesse*—  
whych wodnesse  
1344 *seien*—say  
1346 *turne aȝeyne*—torne  
ayein  
1347 *folke*—folk  
1348 *þe*—omitted

1348 *ouer*—ay  
1351 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hydd  
1352 *seyne*—seyn  
*he* (2)—omitted  
1354 *swyche*—swych thinge  
*hap*—MS. hape  
*ben*—be  
1355 *seyne*—seye  
1358 *come*—comen  
1359 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
[as] *greet[e]*—as grete

1360 *distruccioun*—destruc-  
ciouns  
*doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
*flamme*—flaumbe  
1361 *flamme*—flawmbe  
*wit*—omitted  
1362 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
1363 *clepiþ*—clepyn  
1364 *whiche*—whych  
*somtyme*—whilom  
1366 *for*—MS. of, C. for



because of the  
pride of the  
Constable; as their  
ancestors before  
for the same  
consideration  
had suppressed  
the title of King.

¶ And ryzt for þe same pride ȝoure eldres byforne þat  
tyme hadden don away out of þe Citee of rome þe  
kynges name. þat is to seien. þei nolden haue no  
lenger no kyng ¶ But now yif so be þat dignitees

Virtue is not  
embellished by  
dignities, but  
dignities derive  
honour from  
virtue.  
But what is this  
power, so much  
celebrated and  
desired?  
What are they  
over whom you  
exercise au-  
thority?

1371 *and* powers ben ȝeuen to goode men. þe whiche þing  
is ful ȝelde. what agreable þinges is þer in þo dignitees.  
or powers. but only þe goodenes of folk þat vsen hem.

¶ And perfore it is þus þat honour ne comeþ nat to  
vertue for cause of dignite. but aȝeinward. honour  
comeþ to dignite by cause of vertue. but whiche is  
ȝoure derworþe power þat is so clere *and* so requerable

If thou sawest a  
mouse assuming  
(\* fol. 13 b.)  
command over  
other mice,  
wouldst thou not  
almost burst with  
laughter?

1378 ¶ O ȝe erþelyche bestes considere ȝe nat ouer whiche  
þing þat it semeþ þat ȝe han power. ¶ Now yif þou

say[e] a mouse amongus \*oper myse þat chalenged[e] to  
hymself ward ryzt *and* power ouer alle oper myse. how  
gret scorne woldest þou han of hit. ¶ *Glosa.* ¶ So  
fareþ it by men. þe body haþ power ouer þe body.

What is more  
feeble than man,  
to whom the bite  
of a fly may be  
the cause of  
death?

1383 For yif þow loke wel vpon þe body of a wyzt what  
þing shalt þou fynde moore frele þan is mannes kynde.  
þe whiche ben ful ofte slayn wip bytynge of smale

But how can any  
man obtain do-  
minion over  
another, unless  
it be over his  
body, or, what is  
inferior to his  
body,—over his  
possessions, the  
gifts of Fortune?  
Can you ever  
command a free-  
born soul?  
Can you disturb  
a soul consistent  
with itself, and  
knit together by  
the bond of  
reason?

1387 flies. or ellys wip þe entryng of crepyng wormes in to  
þe priuetees of mennes bodyes. ¶ But wher shal  
men fynden any man þat may exercen or haunten any  
ryzt vpon an oper man but oonly vpon hys body. or  
ellys vpon þinges þat ben lower þen þe body. whiche  
I clepe fortunous possessiouns ¶ Mayst þou euer haue  
any comaundement ouer a fre corage ¶ Mayst þou  
remuen fro þe estat of hys propre reste. a þouzt þat is  
cleuyng to gider in hym self by stedfast resoun. ¶ As  
somytyme a tiraunt wende to confounde a freeman of

1368 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
1369 *seien*—seyn  
1370 *lenger*—lengere  
*kyng*—kyng  
1371 *whiche*—which  
1373 *folk*—foolkys  
1374 *comeþ*—comth  
1375, 1376 *vertue*—vertu  
1376 *comeþ*—comth  
*by*—for  
*whiche*—which

1377 *derworþe*—dereworthe  
*clere*—cleer  
1378 *whiche*—which  
1379 *han*—MS. hanne, C.  
*hau*  
1380 *say[e]*—saye  
*mouse amongus*—mous  
*amonges*  
*myse*—mus;  
1382 *scorne*—scorn  
1383 *haþ*—MS. haþe

1386 *mannes*—man  
1386 *þe* — *slayn* — the  
whiche men wel ofte  
ben slayn  
1388 *mennes bodyes*—mannes  
body  
1391 *lower*—lowers  
*whiche*—the which  
1396 *stedfast*—stidefast  
1396 *somytyme*—whyloin

corage ¶ And wende to constreyne hym by tourment 1397  
to maken hym dyscoueren *and* acusen folk þat wisten  
of a coniuracioun. whiche I clepe a confederacie þat  
was cast azeins þis tyraunt ¶ But þis free man boot  
of hys owen tunge. *and* cast it in þe visage of pilke  
woode tyraunte. ¶ So þat þe tourment; þat þis  
tyraunt wende to han makad matere of cruelte. þis  
wyse man makad[e it] matere of vertues. ¶ But what  
þing is it þat a man may don to an oþer man. þat he  
ne may receyue þe same þing of oþer folke in hym  
self. or þus. ¶ What may a man don to folk. þat folk 1407  
ne may don hym þe same. ¶ I haue herd told of  
busirides þat was wont to sleen hys gestic þat her-  
burghden in hys hous. and he was slayn hym self of  
ercules þat was hys gest ¶ Regulus had[de] taken in  
bataile many men of affrike. and cast hem in to fet-  
teres. but sone after he most[e] giue hys handes to  
ben bounden with þe cheynes of hem þat he had[de]  
sontyme ouercomen. ¶ Wenest þou þan þat he be  
my;ty. þat may nat don a þing. þat oþer ne may don  
hym. þat he doþ to oþer. *and* zit more ouer yif it so  
were þat þise dignites or poweres hadden any propre  
or naturel goodnesse in hem self neuer nolden þei  
comen to shrewes. ¶ For contrarious þinges ne ben  
not wont to ben yfelawshipped togidres. ¶ Nature re-  
fuseþ þat contra[r]ious þinges ben yioigned. ¶ And so 1422  
as I am in certeyne þat ryzt wikked folk han dignitees  
ofte tymes. þan sheweþ it wel þat dignitees *and* powers  
ne ben not goode of hir owen kynde. syn þat þei suf-  
fren hem self to cleuen or ioynen hem to shrewes.  
¶ And certys þe same þing may most digneliche Iugen

Have you not  
read how Anax-  
archus bit off his  
tongue and spat  
it in the face of  
Nicochreon?

What is it that  
one man can do  
to another that  
does not admit of  
retaliation?

Busiris used to  
kill his guests,  
but at last him-  
self was killed  
by Hercules, his  
guest.

Regulus put his  
Carthaginian  
prisoners in  
chains, but was  
afterwards  
obliged to submit  
to the fetters of  
his enemies.

Is he mighty that  
dares not inflict  
what he would  
upon another for  
fear of a requital?  
If powers and  
honours were  
intrinsically good,  
they would never  
be attained by  
the wicked.

An union of  
things opposite  
is repugnant to  
nature.

But as wicked  
men do obtain  
the highest  
honours, it is  
clear that honours  
are not in them-  
selves good,  
otherwise they  
would not fall to  
the share of the  
unworthy.

1399 *whiche*—which  
1401 *owen*—owne  
1406 *receyue*—resseyuen  
1406 *herd told*—MS. herde  
tolde, C. herd told  
1409 *hys*—hise  
*herburghden* — herber-  
weden

1410 *slayn*—sleyn  
1411 *had[de]*—hadde  
1413 *most[e]*—moste  
1414 *bounden*—bownde  
*cheynes*—MS. beues, C.  
cheynes  
*had[de]*—hadde  
1415 *sontyme*—whylom  
1416 *þat*—þing—that hath

no power to don a thinge  
*oþer*—oother  
1417 *hym*—in hym  
*doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
to oþer—in oother  
1421 *togidres*—to-giders  
1423 *certeyne*—certain  
1424 *tymes*—tyme  
1425 *owen*—owne

The worst of men have often the largest share of Fortune's gifts. We judge him to be valiant who has given evidence of his fortitude.

1432 So music maketh a musician, &c. The nature of everything consists in doing what is peculiar to itself, and it repels what is contrary to it.

Riches cannot restrain avarice. Power cannot make a man master of himself if he is the slave of his lusts.

Dignities conferred upon base men do not make them worthy, but rather expose their want of merit. Why is it so? 'Tis because you give false names to things. You dignify riches, power, and honours, with names they have no title to.

In fine, the same may be said of all the gifts of Fortune, in which nothing is desirable, nothing of natural good in them, since they are not always allotted to good men, nor make them good to whom they are attached.

1429 *whiche*—which  
1430 *auzt[e]*—owhte  
1432 *Soþe*—soth  
*swyfte*—swyft  
1435 *is*—nis  
1436 *effectis*—effect  
1437 *oute*—owt

and seyen of alle þe ȝiftis of fortune þat most plentifulously comen to shrewes. ¶ Of þe whiche ȝiftys I trowe þat it auzt[e] ben considered þat no man doutip þat he nis strong. in whom he seep strengþe. and in whom þat swiftnesse is ¶ Soþe it is þat he is swyfte.

Also musyk makeþ musiciens. and fysik makeþ phisiciens. and rethorik rethoriens. ¶ For whi þe nature of euery þing makip his propretee. ne it is nat entermedled wip þe effectis of contrarious þinges. ¶ And as of wil it chasep oute þinges þat to it ben contrarie ¶ But certys rycchesse may nat restreyne auarice vnstaunched ¶ Ne power [ne] makeþ nat a man myȝty ouer hym self. whiche þat vicious lustis holden destreined wip cheins þat ne mowen nat ben vnbounden. and dignitees þat ben ȝeuē to shrewed[e] folk nat oonly ne makip hem nat digne. but it shewep raper al openly þat þei ben vnworþi and vndigne. ¶ And whi is it þus. ¶ Certis for ȝe han ioye to clepen þinges wip fals[e] names. þat beren hem al in þe contrarie. þe whiche names ben ful ofte reproued by þe effect of þe same þinges. so þat \*þise ilke rycchesse ne auzten nat by ryȝt to ben cleped rycchesse. ne whiche power ne auzt[e] not ben cleped power. ne whiche dignitee ne auzt[e] nat ben cleped dignitee.

¶ And at þe laste I may conclude þe same þinge of al þe ȝiftes of fortune in whiche þer nis no þing to ben desired. ne þat haþ in hym self naturel bounte. ¶ as it is ful wel sene. for neyþer þei ne ioynen hem nat alwey to goode men. ne maken hem alwey goode to whom þei ben y-ioigned.

1441 *ben*—be  
1442 *shrewed[e]*—shrewede  
1446 *fals[e]*—false  
*al*—alle  
1447 *whiche*—which  
1448 *auzten*—owhten  
*rycchesse*—rychesses

1450 *whiche*—swich  
*auzt[e]*—owhte  
1451 *whiche*—swich  
*auzt[e]*—owht  
1453 *al*—alle  
1454 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
1455 *sene*—I-sene

## NOUIMUS QUANTOS DEDERAT.

WE han wel knowen how many greet[e] harmes *and*  
destrucciouns weren doñ by þe Emperoure Nero.

[The sixte Metur.]  
We know what  
ruin Nero did.  
1459

¶ He lette brenne þe citees of Rome *and* made slen þe  
senatours. and he cruel somtyme slouȝ hys broþer. *and*  
he was maked moyst wiþ þe blood of hys modir. þat is  
to seyn he let sleen *and* slitten þe body of his modir to  
seen where he was conceiued. *and* he loked[e] on euery  
half vpon hir colde dede body. ne no tere ne wette  
his face. but he was so hard herted þat he myȝt[e] ben  
domesman or Iuge of hire dede beaute. ¶ And ȝitte

He burnt Rome,  
he slew the con-  
script fathers,  
murdered his  
brother, and  
spilt his mother's  
blood.

He looked un-  
moved upon his  
mother's corpse,  
and passed judg-  
ment upon her  
beauty.

1467

neuerþeles gouerned[e] þis Nero by Ceptre al þe peoples  
þat phebus þe sonne may seen comyng from his outerest  
arysyng til he hidde his bemes vndir þe wawes. ¶ þat  
is to seyne. he gouerned[e] alle þe peoples by Ceptre im-  
perial þat þe sonne goþ aboute from est to west ¶ And

Yet this parricide  
ruled over all  
lands, illumined  
by the sun in his  
diurnal course,  
and controlled  
the frozen regions  
of the pole.

1472

eke þis Nero goueyrende by Ceptre. alle þe peoples þat  
ben vndir þe colde sterres þat hyȝten þe seuene triones.  
þis is to seyn he gouerned[e] alle þe poeples þat ben vndir

1475

þe parties of þe norþe. ¶ And eke Nero gouerned[e]  
alle þe poeples þat þe violent wynde Nothus scorchip  
*and* bakip þe brennynges sandes by his drie hete. þat  
is to seyne. alle þe poeples in þe souþe. [but yit ne  
myhte nat al his heye power torne the woodnesse of  
this wykkyd nero / Allas it is greuous fortune it is]. as  
ofte as wicked swerde is ioyned to cruel venym. þat is  
to sein. venimous cruelte to lordshipe.

He governed, too,  
the people in the  
torrid zone.

But yet Nero's  
power could not  
tame his ferocious  
mind.  
It is a grievous  
thing when  
power strength-  
ens the arm of  
him whose will  
prompts him to  
deeds of cruelty.

1478

1458 greet[e]—grete  
1460 lette—let  
1461 somtyme slouȝ—whilom  
slow  
1463 let—lette  
1464 where—wher  
1465 half—halue  
1466 myȝt[e]—myhte  
1467 hire—hyr  
1468 neuerþeles—natheles  
gouerned[e]—gouernede

1468 al—alle  
1469 from—fram  
outerest—owtereste  
1470 hidde—hide  
1471 seyne—seyn  
1472 goþ—MS. goþe, C. goth  
1473 goueyrende—gouernyd  
1474 triones—tyryones  
1475 gouerned[e]—gouernede  
1476 parties—party  
norþe—north

1476 gouerned[e]—gouern-  
ede  
1477 wynde—wynd  
1478 scorchip—scorklith  
1479 seyne—seyn  
souþe—sowth  
1479-81 [but—it is]—MS.  
has: but ne how greuous  
fortune is  
1482 swerde—sward

[The seouende  
prose.]

B. Thou knowest  
that I did not  
covet mortal and  
transitory things.

I only wished to  
exercise my  
virtue in public  
concerns, lest it  
should grow  
feeble by in-  
a tivity.

## TUM EGO SCIS INQUAM.

**H**Anne seide I pus. þou wost wel þiself þat þe  
couetise of mortal þinges ne hadden neuer lord-  
shipe of me. but I haue wel desired matere of þinges  
to done. as who seip. I desired[e] to han matere of  
gouernaunce ouer comunalites. ¶ For vertue stille ne  
sholde not elden. þat is to seyn. þat list þat or he wex

1490 olde ¶ His uertue þat lay now ful stille. ne sholde  
nat perisshe vnexcercised in gouernaunce of comune.

P. A love of  
glory is one of  
those things that  
may captivate  
minds naturally  
great, but not  
yet arrived at  
the perfection of  
virtue.

But consider how  
small and void of  
weight is that  
glory.

Astronomy  
teaches us that  
this globe of earth  
is but a speck  
compared with  
the extent of the  
heavens,  
and is as nothing  
if compared with  
the magnitude  
of the celestial  
sphere.

¶ For whiche men myzten speke or writen of his  
goode gouernement. ¶ *Philosophie*. ¶ For soþe quod  
she. and þat is a þing þat may drawen to gouernaunce  
swiche hertes as ben worþi and noble of hir nature.  
but napeles it may nat drawen or tollen swiche hertes as  
ben y-brouzt to þe ful[le] perfeccioun of vertue. þat is  
to seyn couetyse of glorie and renoun to han wel  
administred þe comune þinges. or doon goode decertes

to profit of þe comune. for se now and considere how  
litel and how voide of al prise is þilke glorie. ¶ Cer-  
teine þing is as þou hast lerned by demonstracioun of  
astronomye þat al þe envyronyng of þe erþe aboute  
ne halt but þe resoun of a prykke at regard of þe gret-  
nesse of heuene. þat is to seye. þat yif þat þer were  
maked comparisoun of þe erþe to þe gretnesse of

1507 heuene. men wolde Iugen in alle þat erþe [ne] helde  
no space ¶ Of þe whiche litel regioun of þis worlde

Ptolemy shows  
that only one-  
fourth of this  
earth is inhabited  
by living crea-  
tures.

Deduct from this  
the space occupied  
by seas, marshes,  
lakes, and deserts,  
and there remains  
but a small pro-  
portion left for the  
abode of man.

þe ferþe partie is enhabitid wiþ lyuyng beestes þat  
we knowen. as þou hast þi self lerned by tholome þat  
prouiith it. ¶ yif þou haddest wiþ drawen and abated  
in þi þouzte fro þilke ferþe partie as myche space as þe  
see and [the] mareys contenen and ouergon and as  
myche space as þe regioun of droughte ouerstrecþeþ.

1487 desired[e]—desyre

1489 wex olde—wax old

1492 whiche—which

speke—spekyn

1496 tollen—MS. tellen, C.

tollen

1497 ful[le]—fulle

1501 al prise—alle prys

1505 seye—seyn

1507 wolds—woldyn

alle—al

[ne]—from C.

1510 lerned—ylerned

1512 þouzte—thowht

myche—moche

1513 [the]—from C.

1514 myche space—moche  
spaces

pat is to seye sandes *and* desertes wel vnneþ sholde 1515

\*per dwellen a ryzt streite place to þe habitacioun of [° fol. 14 b.]

men. *and* 3e þan þat ben environed *and* closed wiþ  
inne þe leest[e] prikke of pilk prikke þenke 3e to  
manifesten 3oure renoun *and* don 3oure name to ben  
born forþe. but 3oure glorie þat is so narwe *and* so  
streyt yprongen in to so litel boundes. how myche  
conteinþe it in largesse *and* in greet doynge. And also 1522

sette þis þer to þat many a nacioun dyuerse of tonge  
*and* of maneres. *and* eke of resoun of hir lyuyng ben  
enhabitid in þe cloos of pilke litel habitacle. ¶ To þe

whiche naciouns what for difficulte of weyes. *and* what  
for diuersite of langages. *and* what for defaute of  
vnusage entercomunynge of marchaundise. nat only þe  
names of singler men ne may [nat] stretchen. but eke 1529

þe fame of Citees ne may nat stretchen. ¶ At þe  
last[e] Certis in þe tyme of Marcus tulyus as hym  
self writeþ in his book þat þe renoun of þe comune of  
Rome ne hadde nat 3itte passed ne cloumben ouer þe  
mountaigne þat hyzt Caucasus. *and* 3itte was pilk  
tyme rome wel wexen *and* gretly redouted of þe parthes. 1535

*and* eke of oper folk enhabityng aboute. ¶ Sest þou  
nat þan how streit *and* how compressed is pilke glorie  
þat 3e trauailen aboute to shew *and* to multiplie. May  
þan þe glorie of a singlere Romeyne stretchen pider  
as þe fame of þe name of Rome may nat clymben ne  
passen. ¶ And eke sest þou nat þat þe maners of  
diuerse folk *and* eke hir lawes ben discordaunt amonge  
hem self. so þat pilke þing þat sommen iugen worpi of  
preysynge. oper folk iugen þat it is worpi of torment.

¶ *and* þer of comeþ þat þou; a man delite hym in 1545

1515 *seye*—seyn  
1516 *streite*—streyt  
1517 *þan*—thanne  
1518 *inne*—in  
1518 *leest[e]*—leste  
1518 *pilk*—thilke  
1518 *þenke 3e*—thinken ye  
1520 *born forþe*—MS. borne,  
C. born, forth

1520 *narwe*—narwh  
1521 *streyt*—streyte  
1521 *myche*—moche  
1522 *conteinþe*—coneyteth  
1525 *habitable*—MS. habit-  
ache, C. habytacule  
1529 [nat]—from C.  
1531 *last[e]*—laste  
1532 *writelþ*—writ

1533 *hadde*—hadden  
1533 *3itte*—omitted  
1534 *hyzt*—hyhte  
1534 *pilk*—thikke  
1535 *wexen*—waxen  
1536 *Sest þou*—sestow  
1538 *shew*—shewe  
1539 *singlere*—singler  
1545 *comeþ*—comth it

And do you, who  
are confined to  
the least point of  
this point, think  
of nothing but of  
blazing far and  
wide your name  
and reputation?  
What is there  
great in a glory  
so circumscribed?

Even in this  
contracted circle,  
there is a great  
variety of nations,

to whom not only  
the fame of par-  
ticular men, but  
even of great  
cities, cannot  
extend.

In the time of  
Marcus Tullius  
the fame of Rome  
did not reach  
beyond Mount  
Caucasus.

How narrow,  
then, is that  
glory which you  
labour to pro-  
pagate.  
Shall the glory of  
a Roman citizen  
reach those places  
where the name  
even of Rome was  
never heard?

Customs and  
institutions differ  
in different  
countries.

What is praise-  
worthy in one is  
blame-worthy in  
another.

It is not the interest of any man who desires renown to have his name spread through many countries. He ought, therefore, to be satisfied with the glory he has acquired at home. But of how many personages, illustrious in their times, have the memorials been lost through the carelessness and neglect of writers. But writings do not preserve the names of men for ever.

1557

But perhaps you suppose that you shall secure immortality if your names are transmitted to future ages. If you consider the infinite space of eternity you will have no reason to rejoice in this supposition. If a *moment* be compared with 10,000 years, there is a proportion between them, though a very small one. But this number of years, multiplied by whatever sum you please, vanishes when compared with the infinite extent of eternity. There may be comparison between finite things, but none between the infinite and finite. Hence it is, that Fame (however lasting), compared with eternity, will seem absolutely nothing.

preysyng of his renoun. he ne may nat in no wise bryngen furpe ne spreden his name to many manere peoples. ¶ And perfore euery maner man auzte to ben paied of hys glorie þat is puplissed among hys owen ney3bores. ¶ And pilke noble renoun shal be restreyned wiþ-izne þe boundes of o maner folk but how many a man þat was ful noble in his tyme. haþ þe nededy and wrecched forȝetyng of writers put oute of mynde and don away. ¶ Al be it so þat certys pilke writynges profiten litel. þe whiche writynges longe and derke elde doþ awaye hope hem and eke her autours. but 3e men semen to geten 3ow a perdurablete whan 3e penke þat in tyme comyng 3oure fame shal lasten. ¶ But napeles yif þou wilt maken comparisoun to þe endeles space of eternite what þing hast þou by whiche þou maist reioysen þe of long lastyng of þi name. ¶ For if þer were maked comparysoun of þe abidyng of a moment to ten þousand wynter. for as myche as hope þo spaces ben endid. ¶ For 3it haþ þe moment some porcioun of hit al þouz it a litel be. ¶ But napeles pilke self noumbre of 3eres. and eke as many 3eres as þer to may be multiplied. ne may nat certys be comparisoun to þe perdurablete þat is een[de]les. ¶ For of þinges þat han ende may be mad comparisoun [but of thinges that ben with-owtyn ende to thinges þat han ende may be maked no comparysoun]. ¶ And for þi is it al þouz renoun of as longe tyme as euer þe lyst to pinken were þouz by þe regard of eternite. þat is vnstauncheable and infinit. it ne sholde nat oonly semen litel. but pleinliche ryȝt nouȝt. ¶ But 3e men certys ne konne

1547 *furpe*—forth  
1548 *manere*—maner  
1548 *perfore*—ther-for  
1548 *auzte*—owhte  
1549 *paied*—apayed  
1549 *hys owen*—hise owne  
1550 *ney3bores*—nesshebores  
1550 *de*—ben  
1552 *haþ*—MS. *habe* [put owt]  
1553 *put* (MS. *putte*)—oute—

1556 *derke*—derk  
1556 *doþ awaye*—MS. *dope*, C.  
1556 *doth a-wey*  
1556 *her autours*—hir actorros  
1557 *3e*—yow  
1557 *semen*—semetn  
1558 *comyng*—to comyng  
1559 *wilt*—wolt  
1560 *whiche*—which  
1563 *myche*—mochel

1584 *þo*—the  
1584 *haþ*—MS. *habe*  
1584 *some*—som  
1586 *self*—selue  
1587 *be* (2)—ben  
1588 *een[de]les*—endeles  
1589 *mad*—MS. *made*, C.  
1589 *maked*  
1589 *[but — comparysoun]*—  
1589 *by*—to [from C.]

don no þing aryȝt. but ȝif it be for þe audience of poeple. *and* for ydel rumours. *and* ȝe forsaken þe grete worpinesse of conscience *and* of vertue. *and* ȝe seken ȝoure gerdouns of þe smale wordes of strange folke. ¶ Hauē now here *and* vndirstonde in þe lyztnesse of whiche pride *and* veyne glorie. how a man scorned[e] festiually *and* myrily swiche vanite. somtyme þere was a man þat had[de] assaied wiþ striuyng wordes an oþer man. ¶ þe whiche nat for vsage of verrey vertue. but for proude veyne glorie had[de] taken vpon hym falsly þe name of a philosopher. ¶ þis raþer man þat I speke of þouȝt[e] he wolde assay[e] where he pilke were a philosopher or no. þat is to seyne yif he wolde han suffred lyztly in pacience þe wronges \*þat weren don vnto hym. ¶ þis feined[e] philosophre took pacience a 1590 litel while. *and* whan he hadde receiued wordes of outerage he as in stryuyng aȝeine *and* reioysyng of hym self seide at þe last[e] ryȝt þus. ¶ vndirstondeȝ þou nat þat I am a philosophre. þat oþer man answered[e] aȝein ful bityngly *and* seide. ¶ I had[de] wel vndirstonden [yt]. yif þou haddest holden þi tonge stille. ¶ But what is it to þise noble worþi men. For certys of swyche folk speke .I. þat seken glorie wiþ vertue. what is it quod she. what atteiniþ fame to swiche folk whan þe body is resolved by þe deef. atte 1600 þe last[e]. ¶ For yif so be þat men dien in al. þat is to seyne body *and* soule. þe whiche þing oure resoun defendiþ vs to byleuen þanne is þere no glorie in no wyse. For what sholde pilke glorie ben. for he of whom þis glorie is seid to be nis ryȝt nouȝt in no wise. 1605 *and* ȝif þe soule whiche þat haþ in it self science of

But yet you do good from no other view than to have the empty applause of the people, foregoing the pleasures of a good conscience in order to have the insignificant praises of other people. This silly vanity was once thus ingeniously and pleasantly rallied. A certain man, who had assumed the name of a philosopher through a love of 'vain-glory,' was told by a man of humour that he could prove he was a philosopher by bearing patiently the injuries offered him. [\* fol. 15.]

After counterfeit- ing patience for a while, the sophist said to the other, 'You must surely confess that I am a philosopher.'

'I might have believed it,' said the other, 'had you held your tongue.' What advantage is it to great and worthy men to be extolled after death?

If body and soul die, then there can be no glory; nor can there be when he (to whom it is ascribed) does not exist.

1590 *whiche*—swych  
1591 *scorned[e]*—scornede  
1592 *swiche*—swych  
1593 *somtyme*—whilom  
1593 *had[de]*—hadde  
1594 *whiche*—which  
1595 *proude*—prowd  
1596 *speke*—spak  
1597 *þouȝt[e]*—thowhte

1587 *assay[e]*—assaye  
1588 *seyne*—seyn  
1589 *feined[e]*—feynede  
1592 *aȝeine*—ayein  
1593 *last[e]*—laste  
vndirstondeȝ þou — vn-  
dirstondow  
1594 *answered[e]*—answerde  
1595 *had[de]*—hadde

1596 [yt]—from C.  
1601 *last[e]*—laste  
1602 *seyne*—seyn  
1604 *for* (2)—whan  
1605 *þis*—thilke  
seid—MS. seide, C. scyd  
nouȝt—nawht  
1606 *haþ*—MS. haþe



But if the soul  
is immortal when  
it leaves the body,  
it takes no  
thought of the  
joys of this  
world.

goode werkes vnbounden fro þe prisoun of þe erþe  
wendeþ frely to þe heuene. dispiseþ it nouȝt þan alle  
erþely occupaciouns. and beyng in heuene reioiseþ pat  
it is exempt from alle erþely pinges [as wo seith /  
1611 thanne rekketh the sowle of no glorie of renoun of this  
world].

## QUICUMQUE SOLAM MENTE.

[The 7th Metre.]  
Let him who  
seeks fame, think-  
ing it to be the  
sovereign good,  
look upon the  
broad universe  
and this circum-  
scribed earth;  
and he will then  
despise a glorious  
name limited to  
such a confined  
space.

Who so þat wiþ ouerþrowyng pouȝt only sekeþ glorie  
of fame. and wenip þat it be souereyne good  
¶ Lete hym loke vpon þe brode shewyng contreys of  
þe heuen. and vpon þe streite sete of þis erþe. and  
he shal be ashamed of þe encres of his name. þat may  
nat fulfille þe litel compas of þe erþe. ¶ O what  
1619 coueiten proude folke to liften vpon hire nekkes in  
ydel and dedely ȝok of þis worlde. ¶ For al pouȝ

Will splendid  
titles and renown  
prolong a man's  
life?

[þat] renoune y-spradde passynge to ferne poeples gob  
by dyuerse tonges. and al pouȝ grete houses and kyn-

1623 redes shyne wiþ clere titles of honours. ȝit napeles  
deef dispiseþ al heye glorie of fame. and deaf wrappeþ  
to gidre þe heye heuedes and þe lowe and makeþ egal  
and euene þe heyest[e] to þe lowest[e]. ¶ where  
wonen now þe bones of trewe fabricius. what is  
now brutus or stiern Caton þe þinne fame ȝit lastynge

In the grave  
there is no dis-  
tinction between  
high and low.

Where is the good  
Fabricius now?  
Where the noble  
Brutus, or stern  
Cato?

1629 of hir ydel names is markid wiþ a fewe lettres. but  
al pouȝ we han knowen þe faire wordes of þe fames of  
hem. it is nat ȝeuene to knowe hem þat ben dede and  
consumpt. Liggip þanne stille al vtterly vnknowable  
ne fame ne makeþ ȝow nat knowe. and yif ȝe wene  
to lyuen þe lenger for wynde of ȝoure mortal name.

Their empty  
names still live,  
but of their  
persons we know  
nothing.

Fame cannot  
make you known.

1635 whan o cruel day shal rauyshe ȝow. þan is þe secunde  
deef dwellyng in ȝow. *Glosa.* þe first deaf he clepip

1608 nouȝt þan—nat thanne  
1610 from—fro  
1610—1612 [as—world]—  
from C.  
1615 Lete—Lat  
loke—looken  
1616 sete—Cyte  
1617 be—ben

1619 opon—vp  
1620 and dedely—in the dedly  
1621 y-spradde—ysprad  
[þat]—from C.  
ferne—MS. serue, C. ferne  
gob—MS. goþe, C. goth  
1622 and (2)—or  
1623 shyne—shynen

1623 clere—cler  
1624 al—alle  
1626 heyest[e]—heyoste  
lowest[e]—loweste  
1628 stiern—MS. sciern, C.  
stierne  
1632 consumpt—consumeþ  
1634 lenger—longere

here þe departyng of þe body *and* þe soule. ¶ *¶* and  
þe secunde deef he clepeþ as here. þe styntyng of  
þe renoune of fame.\*

It will be effaced  
by conquering  
Time, so that  
death will be  
doubly victorious.

\* The next three  
chapters are from  
the Camb. MS.

[SET NE ME INEXORABILE CONTRA.]

**B**Vt for-as-mochel as thou shalt nat wenen *quod* she  
þat I bere vntretable batayle ayenis fortune // yit  
som-tyme it by-falleth þat she desseyuable desserueth  
to han ryht good thank of men // *And* þat is whan she  
hire self opneth / *and* whan she descouereth hir frownt /  
*and* sheweth hir maneres *par-aenture* yit vndir-  
stondesthow nat þat .I. shal seye // it is a wondyr þat .I.  
desyre to telle / *and* forþi vnnethe may I. vnpleyten my  
sentense *with* wordes for I. deme þat contraryos fortune  
profiteth more to men than fortune debonayre // For  
al-wey whan fortune semeth debonayre than she lyeth  
falsly in by-hetyng the hope of welefulnesse // but for-  
sothe *contraryos* fortune is alwey sothfast / whan she  
sheweth hir self vnstable thorw hyr chaungyng // the  
amyable fortune desseyueth folk / the contrarye fortune  
techeth // the amyable fortune byndeth *with* the beaute  
of false goodys the hertes of folk þat vsen hem / the  
contrarye fortune vnbyndeth hem by þe knowyng of  
freele welefulnesse // the amyable fortune maysthow sen  
alwey wyndyng *and* flowyng / *and* euere mysknowyng  
of hir self // the contrarye fortune is a-tempre *and* re-  
streynynd *and* wys thorw excersyse of hir aduersyte // at  
the laste amyable fortune *with* hir flaterynges draweth  
mys wandryng men fro the souereyne good // the con-  
traryos fortune ledith ofte folk ayein to sothfast goodes /  
*and* haleth hem ayein as *with* an hooke / weenesthow  
thanne þat thou owhtest to leten this a lytel thing / þat  
this aspre *and* horrible fortune hath discoueryd to the / the  
thowhtes of thy trewe frendes // For-why this ilke for-

[The viij prose.]  
'But do not  
believe,' said  
Philosophy, 'that  
I am an im-  
placable enemy  
to Fortune.  
This inconstant  
dame sometimes  
deserves well of  
men,  
when she appears  
in her true  
colours.  
And what I say  
may perhaps ap-  
pear paradoxical.  
That is, that  
adverse fortune  
is more beneficial  
than prosperous  
fortune.'

1650

The latter lies  
and deceives us,  
the former dis-  
plays her natural  
inconstancy.

That deceives us,  
this instructs us;  
that, by a fal-  
lacious show of  
good, enlaves  
the mind;  
this, by the  
knowledge of her  
fickleness, frees  
and absolves  
it.

The one is waver-  
ing and incapable  
of reflection, the  
other is staid and  
wise through  
experience of  
adversity.  
Lastly, prosper-  
ous fortune leads  
men astray.  
Adversity teaches  
them wherein  
real happiness  
consists.  
It renders us no  
inconsiderable  
service in  
enabling us to  
recognize our  
true friends.

1668

1669 tune hath departyd *and* vncoueryd to the bothe the  
certeyn vysages *and* ek the dowtos visages of thy  
felawes // whan she departyd away fro the / she took

1672 away hyr frendes *and* lafte the thyne frendes // now  
whan thow were ryche *and* weleful as the semede / with  
how mochel woldesthow han bowht the fulle know-  
ynge of this // þat is to seyn the knowynge of thy  
verray frendes // now pleyne the nat thanne of Rychesse  
.I.-lorn syn thow hast fowndyn the moste presyos kynde  
of Rychesses þat is to seyn thy verray frendes.

At what price  
would you not  
have bought this  
knowledge in  
your prosperity?

Complain not,  
then, of loss of  
wealth, since  
thou hast found  
infinitely greater  
riches in your  
true friends.

## QUOD MUNDUS STABILI FIDE.

[The viij Metur.]  
This world, by  
an invariable  
order, suffers  
change.  
Elements, that by  
nature disagree,  
are restrained by  
concord.

That þ<sup>e</sup> world with stable feith / varieth acordable  
chaungynge // þat the contraryos qualite of element;  
holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / þat phebus  
the sonne with his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the  
rosene day / þat the mone hath commaundement ouer the  
nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the euesterre hat browt //

The sea is thus  
kept within its  
proper bounds.

1684 þat þ<sup>e</sup> se gredy to flowen constreyneth with a certeyn ende  
hise floodes / so þat it is nat l[e]ueful to streche hise

This concord is  
produced by love,  
which governeth  
earth and sea,  
and extends its  
influence to the  
heavens.

1687 brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // þat is to seyn  
to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges  
is bownden with looue / þat gouerneth erthe *and* see / *and*  
hath also commaundement; to the heuenes / *and* yif  
this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges þat now  
louen hem to gederes / wolden maken a batayle contin-  
uely *and* stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde /  
the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre  
moeuynge // this looue halt to gideres poeples Ioygned  
with an hooly bond / *and* knytteth sacrament of mar-  
yages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to  
trew felawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke  
loue þat gouerneth heuene gouerned[e] yowre corages /

If this chain of  
love were broken  
all things would  
be in perpetual  
strife, and the  
world would go  
to ruin.

Love binds  
nations together,  
it ties the nuptial  
knot, and dictates  
binding laws to  
friendship.

Men were truly  
blest if governed  
by this celestial  
love!

EXPLICIT LIBER 2<sup>us</sup>.

1690 hath—H. he hath

INCIPIT LIBER 3<sup>us</sup>

IAM CANTUM ILLA FINIERAT.

By this she hadde endid hire songe / whan the swetnesse  
 of hire ditee hadde thorw perced me þat was desirous  
 of herkninge / and .I. astoned hadde yit streyhte myn  
 Eres / þat is to seyn to herkne the bet / what she wolde  
 seye // so þat a litel here after .I. seyde thus // O thow  
 þat art souereyn comfort of Angwissos corages // So thow  
 hast remounted and norysshed me with the weylhte of thy  
 sentences and with delit of thy syngynge // so þat .I. trowe  
 nat now þat .I. be vnpanygal to the strokes of fortune / as  
 who seyth. I. dar wel now suffren al the assautes of for-  
 tune and wel deffende me fro hyr // and tho remedies  
 whyche þat thow seydest hire byforn weren ryht sharpe  
 Nat oonly þat .I. am nat agrysen of hem now // but .I. de-  
 siros of herynge axe gretely to heeren tho remedies // 1713  
 than seyde she thus // þat feeled .I. ful wel quod she //  
 whan þat thow ententyf and styлле rauysshedest my  
 wordes // and .I. abood til þat thow haddest swych habyte  
 of thy thowght as thow hast now // or elles tyl þat .I.  
 my self had[de] maked to the the same habyt / which  
 þat is a moore verray thinge // And certes the remenaunt  
 of thinges þat ben yit to seye / ben swyche // þat fyrst  
 whan men tasten hem they ben bytynge / but whan  
 they ben resseyuyd with-inne a whyht than ben they  
 swete // but for thow seyst þat thow art so desirous to  
 herkne hem // wit[h] how gret brennyng woldesthow  
 glowen / yif thow wystest whyder .I. wol leden the //  
 whydyre is þat quod .I. // to thilke verray welefulnesse  
 quod she // of whyche thyng herte dremeth // but  
 for as moche as thy syhte is ocupied and distorbed / by  
 Imagynasyon of herthely thynges / thow mayst nat yit  
 sen thilke selue welefulnesse // do quod .I. and shewe

[The fyrste prose.]  
 Philosophy now  
 ended her song.  
 I was so charmed  
 that I kept a  
 listening as if  
 she were still  
 speaking.

At last I said,  
 O sovereign com-  
 forter of dejected  
 minds, how much  
 hast thou re-  
 freshed me with  
 the energy of thy  
 discourse,  
 so that I now  
 think myself  
 almost an equal  
 match for For-  
 tune and able to  
 resist her blows.  
 I fear not, there-  
 fore, thy reme-  
 dies, but earnestly  
 desire to hear  
 what they are.

P. When I per-  
 ceived that, silent  
 and attentive, you  
 received my  
 words, I expected  
 to find such a  
 state of mind in  
 you, or rather, I  
 created in you  
 such an one.  
 What remains to  
 be said is of such  
 a nature that  
 when it is first  
 tasted it is  
 pungent and un-  
 pleasant, but  
 when once swal-  
 lowed it turns  
 sweet, and is  
 grateful to the  
 stomach.  
 But because you  
 say you would  
 now gladly hear,  
 with what desire  
 would you burn  
 if you could  
 imagine whither  
 I am going to  
 lead you?  
 B. Whither is  
 that, I pray?  
 P. To that true  
 felicity, of which  
 you seem to have  
 but a faint fore-  
 taste.

1702 *streyhte*—H. strengthened | 1718 *had[de]*—H. hade  
 1712 *am nat*—H. nam nought

But your sight is clouded with false forms, so that it cannot yet behold this same felicity. B. Show me, I pray, that true happiness without delay. P. I will gladly do so at your desire, but I will first describe that false cause (of happiness), so that you may be better able to comprehend the exact model.

\* Here the Add. MS. begins again.

[The first meter.]

He who would sow seed must first clear the ground of useless weeds, so that he may reap an abundant harvest. Honey tastes all the sweeter to a palate disgusted by offensive flavours.

The stars shine all the clearer when the southern showery blasts cease to blow. When Lucifer has chased away the dark night, then Phoebus mounts his gay chariot.

So you, beholding the false felicity, and withdrawing your neck from the yoke of earthly affections, will soon see the sovereign good.

[The 2<sup>d</sup> prose.] Philosophy, with a serious air, and appearing to recollect herself, and to rouse up all her faculties, thus began. All the cares and desires of men seek one end—happiness.

[\* fol. 15 b.]

me / what is thilke verray welefulnesse / .I. preye the with-howte tarynge // þat wole .I. gladly don *quod* she / for the cause of the // but .I. wol fyrst marken the by wordes / and I wol enforcen me to enformen the // thilke false cause of blysfulnesse þat thow more knowest / so þat whan thow hast fully by-holden thilke false goodes and torned thyne eyen to þat oother syde / thow mowe knowe the clernesse of verray blysfulnesse //]

\* QUI SERERE INGENIUM.

¶ Who so wil sowe a felde plentiuous. lat hym first delyuer it of þornes and kerue asondre wiþ his hooke þe bushes and þe ferne so þat þe corne may comen heuy of eres and of greins. hony is þe more swete yif mouþes han firste tastid sauoures þat ben wikke. ¶ þe sterres shynen more agreably whan þe wynde Nothus letiþ his ploungy blastes. and aftir þat lucifer þe day sterre hap chased away þe derke nyzt. þe day þe feirer lediþ þe rosene horse of þe sonne. ¶ Ryzt so þou byholdyng first þe fals[e] goodes. bygynne to wiþdrawe þi nek[ke] fro þe 3ok of erpely affeccions. and afterwarde þe verrey goodes shollen entre in to þi corage. 1750

TUNC DEFIXO PAULULUM.

þo fastned[e] she a lytel þe syzt of hir eyen and wiþdrow hir ryzt as it were in to þe streite sete of hir pouzt. and bygan to speke ryzt þus. Alle þe cures quod she of mortal folk whiche þat trauaylen hem in many manere studies gon certys by diuerse weies. ¶ But napeles þei enforced hem \*to comen oonly to on

1734 wol—H. shalle  
1739 wil—wole  
felde—feeld  
1740 delyuer—delyuere  
of—fro  
hooke—hook  
1741 bushes—bosses  
ferne—fern  
corne—korn  
1743 firste—fyrst

1743 wikke—wykyd  
1744 wynde—wynd  
his—hise  
1745 hap—MS. hape  
1746 feirer—fayrere  
1747 horse—hors  
Ryzt—And Ryht  
1748 fals[e]—false  
bygynne—bygyn  
wiþdrawe—with drawn

1748 nek[ke]—nekke  
1749 afterwarde—afterward  
1750 entre—entren  
1751 fastned[e]—fastnade  
wiþdrow—MS. wiþdrown, C. with drow  
1752 sete—Cyte  
1756 enforced—enforsen

ende of blisfulnesse [And blysfulnesse] is swiche a goode  
 þat who so haþ gotten it he ne may ouer þat no þing more  
 desiire. and þis þing for soþe is þe souereyne good þat con-  
 teinip in hym self al manere goodes. to þe whiche goode  
 yif þere failed[e] any þing. it myzt[e] nat ben souereyne  
 goode. ¶ For þan were þere som goode out of þis ilke soue-  
 reyne goode þat myzt[e] ben desired. Now is it clere and  
 certeyne þan þat blisfulnesse is a perfit estat by þe con-  
 gregacioun of alle goodes. ¶ þe whiche blisfulnesse as  
 I haue seid alle mortal folke enforcen hem to gotten by  
 dyuerse weyes. ¶ For-whi þe couetise of verray goode  
 is naturely y-plaunted in þe hertys of men. ¶ But þe  
 myswandryng errour mysledip hem in to fals[e] goodes.  
 ¶ of þe whiche men some of hem wenen þat soue-  
 reygne goode is to lyue wip outen nede of any þing.  
 and traueilen hem to ben habundaunt of rychesse.  
 and some oþer men demen. þat souerein goode be forto  
 be ryzt digne of reuerences. and enforcen hem to ben  
 reuerenced among hir neyȝbours. by þe honours þat þei  
 han ygeten ¶ and some folk þer ben þat halden þat  
 ryzt heyȝe power to be souereyn goode. and enforcen  
 hem forto regnen or ellys to ioignen hem to hem þat  
 regnen. ¶ And it semep to some oþer folk þat noblesse  
 of renoun be þe souerein goode. and hasten hem to  
 gotten glorious name by þe artes of werre or of pees.  
 and many folke mesuren and gessen þat souerein goode  
 be ioye and gladnesse and wenen þat it be ryzt blisful  
 [thyng] to ploungen hem in uoluptuous delit. ¶ And  
 þer ben folk þat enterchaungen þe causes and þe endes

True happiness is that complete good which, once obtained, leaves nothing more to be desired. It is the sovereign good, and comprehends all others. It lacks nothing, otherwise it could not be the supreme good. Happiness is, therefore, that perfect state, in which all other goods meet and centre. It is the object which all men strive after. A desire of the true good is a natural instinct, but error misleads them to pursue false joys.

1769

Some, imagining the supreme good to consist in lacking nothing, labour for an abundance of riches; others, supposing that this good lies in the reverence and esteem of their fellow men, strive to acquire honourable positions. There are some, again, who place it in supreme power, and seek to rule, or to be favoured by the ruling powers. There are those who fancy fame to be the height of happiness, and seek by the arts of war or peace to get renown. Many there are who believe nothing to be better than joy and gladness, and think it delightful to plunge into luxury.

1757 [And blysfulnesse] —  
 goode—good [from C.  
 1758 so—so þat  
 hab—MS. haþe  
 1759 souereyne—souereyn  
 1760 al—alle  
 goode—good  
 1761 þere—ther  
 failed[e]—faylyde  
 myzt[e]—myhte  
 souereyne goode—souereyn  
 good  
 1762 þan—thanne  
 þere—ther

1762 goode—good  
 souereyne—souereyn  
 1763 goode—good  
 myzt[e]—myhte  
 1764 certeyne—certain  
 1765 seid—MS. seide, C.  
 folke—foolk [seyd  
 1767 goode—good  
 1768 fals[e]—false  
 1770 souereyne goode is—  
 souereyn good be  
 1771 lyue wip outen—lyuen  
 with owte  
 1772 rychesse—Rychesses

1773 some—som  
 goode be—good ben  
 1774 be—ben  
 1775 neyȝbours—nesshebors  
 1776 halden—holden  
 1777 heyȝe—heyh  
 to—omitted  
 goode—good  
 1780 goode—good  
 1781 or—and  
 1782 folke—folk  
 goode—good  
 1783 be—by  
 1784 [thyng]—from C.

Some there are who use these causes and ends interchangeably, as those who desire riches as a means of getting power; or who desire power in order to get money or renown. In all they do they have a particular end in view. Nobility and popular favour are sought after by some in order to become famous. By others, wives and children are only desired as sources of pleasure. Friendship must not be reckoned among the goods of fortune, but among those of virtue, for it is a very sacred thing. All else are desired either for the power or pleasure they afford.

1802

The goods of the body fall under the same predicament. Strength and a good stature seem to give power and worthiness. Beauty and swiftness give glory and fame; and health gives delight. In all these happiness alone is sought. What a man most wishes for, that he esteems the supreme good, which, as we have defined, is happiness. Thou hast now before thee a view of human felicity (falsely so called), that is, riches, honours, power, glory, and delight, which last *Epicurus*

of pise forseide goodes as þei þat desiren rycchesse to han power *and* delices. Or ellis þei desiren power forto han moneye or for cause of renoun. ¶ In pise þinges *and* in swyche oper þinges is tourned al þe entencioun of desirynges *and* [of] werkes of men. ¶ As þus. ¶ Noblesse *and* fauour of poeple whiche þat ȝiueþ as it semeþ a manere clernesse of renoun. ¶ *and* wijf *and* children þat men desiren for cause of delit *and* mirinesse. ¶ But forsoþe frendes ne shollen nat ben rekened among þe goodes of fortune but of vertue. for it is a ful holy manere ping. alle pise oper þinges forsoþe ben taken for cause of power. or ellis for cause of delit. ¶ Certis now am I redy to referen þe goodes of þe body to pise forseide þinges abouen. ¶ For it semeþ þat strengþe *and* gretnesse of body ȝeuen power *and* worpinesse. ¶ *and* þat beaute *and* swiftenesse ȝeuen noblesse *and* glorie of renoun. *and* hele of body semeþ ȝiuen delit. ¶ In alle pise þingus it semeþ oonly þat blisfulnesse is desired. ¶ For-whi þilke ping þat euery man desirþ moost ouer alle þinges. he demip þat be þe souereyne goode. ¶ But I haue diffined þat blisfulnesse is þe souereyne goode. for whiche euery wyȝt demip þat þilke estat þat he desirþ ouer alle þinges þat it be þe blisfulnesse. ¶ Now hast þou þan byforne [thy eyen] almost al þe purposed forme of þe welfulness of mankynde. þat is to seyne rycchesse. honours. power. glorie. *and* delitz. þe whiche delit oonly considered *Epicurus* Iuged *and* establised. þat delit is þe souereyne goode. for as myche as alle oper þinges as hym þouȝt[e] by-refte away ioie *and* myrþe from þe herte. ¶ But I retourne aȝeyne to þe studies of meen.

1786 *rycchesse*—rychesses1787 *delices*—delities1789 *oper*—oother*al*—alle

1790 [of]—from C.

1794 *shollen*—sholden1795 *þe*—tho1796 *oper*—oother1801 *swiftenesse*—swettnesse1803 *ȝiuen*—MS. *ȝiueþ*, C.

yeuen

1806, 1807 *souereyne goodes*—*souereyn good*1807 *whiche*—whyth1809 *þe*—omitted [for]*þan byforne*—thanne by-

1810 [thy eyen]—from C.;

MS. *has* ȝeuen aȝeyne*almost*—almest*welfulnesse*—wefefulnesse1811 *seyne rycchesse*—seyn*Rychesses*1814 *souereyne goode*—soue-*reyn good**myche*—moche*oper*—oother1815 *þouȝt[e]*—thowhte*from*—fram1816 *aȝeyne*—ayein

of whiche men þe corage alwey rehershþ *and* seekeþ þe souereyne goode of alle be it so þat it be wiþ a derke memorie [but he not by whiche paath]. ¶ Ryzt as a dronke man not nat by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house. ¶ Semeþ it panne þat folk folyen *and* erren þat enforcen hem to haue nede of no ping ¶ Certys þer nys non oper ping þat may so weel perfourny blisfulnesse as an estat plenteuous \*of alle goodes þat ne haþ nede of none oper ping. but þat it is suffisant of hym self. vnto hym self. and foleyen swyche folk panne. þat wenen þat pilk ping þat is ryzt goode. þat it be eke ryzt worpi of honour *and* of reuerence. ¶ Certis nay. for þat ping nys neyþer foule ne worpi to ben dispised þat al þe entencioun of mortal folke trauaille forto geten it. ¶ And power auzt[e] nat þat eke to be rekened amonges goodes what ellis. for it nys nat to wene þat pilke ping þat is most worpi of alle pinges be feble *and* wiþ out strengþe *and* clernesse of renoun auzte þat to ben dispised. ¶ Certys þer may no man forsake þat al ping þat is ryzt excellent *and* noble. þat it ne semeþ to be ryzt clere *and* renowned. ¶ For certis it nedip nat to seie. þat blisfulnesse be anguissous ne dreri ne subgit to greuances ne to sorwes. syn þat in ryzt litel pingus folk seken to haue *and* to vsen þat may deliten hem. ¶ Certys pise ben þe pinges þat men wolen *and* desyren to geten. and for þis cause desiren þei rycches. dignites. regnes. glorie *and* delices ¶ For þerby wenen þei to han suffisaunce honour power. renoun *and* gladnesse. ¶ panne is it goode. þat men seken þus by so many dyuerse studies. In whiche desijr it may lyztly be shewed.

considered as the sovereign good. I now return to the inclinations and pursuits of mankind.

1820

Their minds are bent upon the chief good, and are ever seeking it with a darkened understanding, like a drunken man,

[\* fol. 18.] who cannot find his way home. Do they go astray who strive to keep themselves from want?

Ry no means. No state is happier than that in which a man is above want, and independent of others. Are they guilty of folly that seek esteem and reverence?

No; for that is not contemptible for which all men strive.

Is not power to be reckoned amongst desirable goods?

Why not? For that is not an insignificant good which invests a man with authority and command. Fame also is to be regarded, for everything excellent is also shining and renowned.

We hardly need say that happiness is not an unjoyous and melancholy state, for in the pursuit of the smallest matters men seek only pleasure.

Hence it is that mankind seek riches, &c., because by them they hope to get independence, honour, &c. However varied

1818 *souereyne goode*—*souereyn* good  
of—omitted  
alle—al  
derke—dirkyd  
1819 [*but—paath*]*—from C.*  
1820 *dronke*—drunken  
pape—paath  
1821 *home*—hym

1823 *perfourny*—*performe*  
1825 *hap*—MS. *hape*  
none—nou  
1827 *pilk*—thilke  
1828 *goode*—good  
1829 *foule*—fowl  
1830 *al*—welneyh alle  
1831 *trauaille*—trauaylen  
auzt[e]—owhte

1832 *be*—ben  
1834 *out*—owte  
1835 *auzte*—owhte  
1836 *al*—alle  
1837 *be*—ben  
clere—cleer  
1843 *rycches*—Rychesses  
1846 *goode*—good  
1847 *be*—ben



their desires,  
Happiness is their  
sole pursuit.  
However various  
men's opinions  
are respecting  
happiness, all  
agree in pursuing  
it as the end of  
their actions and  
desires.

[The 2d<sup>e</sup> Metw.]  
I will now sing  
of Nature's laws,  
by which the  
universe is  
governed.

how grete is þe strengþe of nature. ¶ For how so þat  
men han dyuerse sentences *and* discordyng algates men  
accordyn alle in lyuyng þe ende of goode. 1850

## QUANTAS RERUM FLECTAT.

IT likeþ me to shew[e] by subtil songe wiþ slakke *and*  
delitable soun of strenges how þat nature myzty en-  
clineþ *and* flitteþ gouernementz of pinges ¶ *and* by  
whiche lawes she purueiable kepþ þe grete worlde. *and*

1855 how she bindyng restreineþ alle pingus by a bonde þat  
may nat be vnbounden. ¶ Al be it so þat þe liouns of

[j] The Punic lion  
submits to man,  
and dreads the  
keeper's lash;

þe contree of pene beren þe fair[e] cheines. *and* taken  
metes of þe handes of folk þat zeuen it hem. *and*

1859 dreden her sturly maystres of whiche þei ben wont to  
suffren [betinges]. yif þat hir horrible mouþes ben bi-  
bled. þat is to sein of bestes deuoured. ¶ Hir corage

yet, if he once  
taste blood,

of tyme passeþ þat hap ben ydel *and* rested. repaireþ  
agein þat þei roren greuously. *and* remembren on hir

his savage in-  
stincts revive,

1864 nature. *and* slaken hir nekkes from hir cheins vn-  
bounden. *and* hir maistre first to-teren wiþ bloddy tope  
assaieþ þe woode wrappes of hem. ¶ þis is to sein þei

and his keeper  
falls a victim to  
his fury.

freten hir maister. ¶ *And* þe Iangland brid þat syngþ  
on þe heye braunches. þis is to sein in þe wode *and*  
after is inclosed in a streit cage. ¶ al pouz [þat] þe

[k]  
If the caged bird  
though daintily  
fed, gets a sight  
of the pleasant  
grove where she  
was wont to sing,

1870 pleiyng besines of men zeueþ hem honied[e] drinkes  
*and* large metes. wiþ swete studie. ¶ 3it napeles yif  
pilke brid skippyng oute of hir streite cage seep þe  
agreable shadewes of þe wodes. she defouleþ wiþ hir  
fete hir metes yshad *and* sekeþ mournyng oonly þe  
wode *and* twitriþ desiryng þe wode wiþ hir swete  
voys. ¶ þe 3erde of a tree þat is haled adoun by myzty

she will spurn  
her food, and  
pine for the  
beloved woods.

[l]  
The sapling, bent  
down by a mighty

1848 *grote*—gret  
1849 *algates*—Allegates  
1850 *goode*—good  
1851 *shewe*[e]—shewe  
1854 *whiche*—MS. swiche, C.  
whyche  
1855 *world*—world  
1856 *be*—ben  
*vnbounden*—vnbownde

1857 *fair*[e]—fayre  
1860 [betinges]—from C.  
1862 *passeþ*—passed  
1864 *from*—fram  
*vnbounden*—vnbownde  
1865 *to-teren*—to-torn  
*tope*—toth  
1867 *Iangland*—Iangelynge  
1869 *streit*—streyht

1870 *pleiyng*—MS. pleinyng,  
C. pleyng  
*besines*—bysynesse  
*honied*[e]—honyede  
1872 *oute*—owt  
1873 *agreable*—agreables  
1874 *fete*—feet  
1875 *twitriþ*—twiterith

strengþe bowiþ redely þe crophe adoun. but yif þat þe hande of hym þat it bente lat it gon azein. ¶ An oon þe crop lokeþ vp ryȝt to heuene. ¶ þe sonne phebus þat failleþ at euene in þe westrene wawes retorniþ azein eftsones his cart by a priue paþe þere as it is wont aryse. ¶ Alle pinges seken azein in to hir propre cours. and alle pinges reioisen hem of hir retournynge azein to hir nature ne noon ordinaunce nis bytaken to pinges but þat. þat haþ ioignyng þe endynge to þe bygynnyng. and haþ makid þe cours of it self stable þat it chaungeþ nat from hys propre kynde. 1887

## VOSQUE TERRENA ANIMALIA.

\* Certis also ȝe men þat ben erpeliche bestes dremen alwey [yowre bygynnyng] al þouȝ it be wiþ a pinne ymaginacioun. and by a maner þouȝt al be it nat clerly ne perfitly ȝe looken from a fer til pilk verray fyn of blisfulnesse. and þerfore þe naturel entencioun ledeþ ȝow to pilk verray good ¶ But many manere errors mistourniþ ȝow þer fro. ¶ Considere now yif þat be pilke pinges by whiche a man weniþ to gete hym blysfulnesse. yif þat he may comen to pilke ende þat he wenep to come by nature ¶ For yif þat moneye or honours or pise oþer forseide pinges bryngen to men swiche a ping þat no goode ne faille hem. ne semeþ faille. ¶ Certys þan wil I graunt[*e*] þat þei ben maked blisful. by pilke pinges þat þei han geten. ¶ but yif so be þat pilke pinges ne mowe nat perfourmen þat þei by-heten and þat þer be defaute of many goodes. ¶ Shewep it nat þan clerely þat fals beaute of blisfulnesse is knowe and a-teint in pilke pinges. ¶ First and forward þou þi self þat haddest

hand, will resume its natural position as soon as the restraining force is removed. [111]

Though the sun sets in the western main at eve, yet by a secret path he takes his wonted journey toward the east. All things pursue their proper course, obedient to the source of order.

Hence, throughout the world entire stability is found, for all things, having fulfilled their appointed course, return from whence they came.

[The 3<sup>d</sup> prose.] [\* fol. 18 b.]

O earthly animals, you have an indistinct perception of your beginning, and you have ever the true end of felicity in view, but your natural instincts are perverted by many errors. 1893

Can men obtain the end they have in view by the means they usually employ in the pursuit of happiness? If riches and honours and the like make men happy, so that they shall want for nothing, then happiness may be procured by these acquisitions. 1901

But if these things cannot make good what they promise, if there still be something to be desired, then they are delusions, and the felicity after all is a counterfeit.

1877 *crophe*—crop  
1878 *hande*—hand  
1879 *bente*—bent  
1890 *failleþ*—falleth  
1891 *cart*—carte  
a—omitted  
1892 *paþe*—paath  
1893 *of*—MS. of of  
1895 *hap*—MS. hape

1895 *ioignyng*—Ioyned  
1896 *hap*—MS. hape [from C.  
1899 *yowre bygynnyng*—  
al—MS. as, C. Al  
1891 *from*—fram  
1892 *to thylke*  
1892 *be*—omitted  
1893 *pilk*—thylke  
1895 *be*—by

1896 *gete*—geten  
1899 *swiche*—swych  
1899 *good*—good  
1900 *wil*—wile  
1901 *graunt*[*e*]—graunte  
1904 *many*—manye  
1904 *clerely*—clerly  
1904 *fals*—false  
1905 *knowe*—knownen

In your prosperity were you never annoyed by some wrong or grievance?

haboundaunces of rycchesses nat long agon. ¶ I axe  
3if þat in þe haboundaunce of alle þilk[e] rycchesses  
þou were neuer anguissous or sory in þi corage of any  
1910 wrong or greuaunce þat by-tidde þe on any syde.

B. I must confess that I cannot remember ever being wholly free from some trouble or other.

P. That was because something was absent which you did desire, or something present which you would fain be quit of.

B. That's quite true.

P. Then you did desire the presence of the one and the absence of the other?

B. I confess I did. P. Every man is in need of what he desires.

B. Certainly he is. P. If a man lack anything can he be supremely happy?

B. No.

P. Did you not in your abundance want for somewhat?

B. What then if I did?

P. It follows that riches cannot put a man beyond all want, although this was what they seemed to promise.

Money may part company with its owner, however unwilling he may be to lose it.

B. I confess that's true.

P. It ought to be confessed when every day we see might prevailing over right.

From whence springs so much litigation, but from this, that men seek to re-

¶ Certys quod I it remembreþ me nat þat euere I was so free of my þouzt. þat I ne was al-wey in anguyshe of somewhat. þat was þat þou lakkedest þat þou noldest han lakked. or ellys þou haddest þat þou noldest han had. ryzt so is it quod I þan. desiredest þou þe presence of þat oon and þe absence of þat oþer. I graunt[e] wel quod .I. for soþe quod she þan nedip þer somewhat þat euery man desireþ. 3e þer nedip quod I.

¶ Certis quod she and he þat hap lakke or nede of a wyzt nis nat in euery way suffisaunt to hym self. no quod .I. and þou quod she in alle þe plente of þi rycchesse haddest pilke lak of suffisaunce. ¶ what ellis quod .I. ¶ þanne may nat rycchesse maken þat a man nis nedy. ne þat he be suffisaunt to hym self. and þat was it þat þei byhyzten as it semeþ. ¶ and eke certys I trowe þat þis be gretly to consydere þat moneye ne hap nat in hys owen kynde þat it ne may ben by-nomen of hem þat han it maugre hem. ¶ I by-knowe it wel quod I ¶ whi sholdest þou nat by-knowen it quod she. whan euery day þe strengere folke by-nymen it fram þe febler maugre hem. ¶ Fro whennes comen ellys alle pise foreine compleintes or quereles of pletyngus. ¶ But for þat men axen azeine her moneye þat hap be by-nomen hem by force or by gyle. and alwey maugre hem. ¶ Ryzt so it is quod I. þan quod she hap a man nede to seken hym foreyne helpe by whiche he may defende hys moneye. who may say nay

1908 þilk[e]—thylke  
1913 þat—lakkedest—And was nat þat quod she for þat the lakked som-what  
1915 had—MS. hadde, C. had  
1917 graunt[e]—graunte  
1919 hap—MS. haþe  
a wyzt—awht  
1921 alle—al

1922 rycchesse—Rychesses lak—lakke  
1923 rycchesse—Rychesses  
1927 hap—MS. haþe  
owen—owne  
1930 strengere folke by-nymen—strengere folk by-nemyn  
1931 fram—fro

1931 febler—febelere  
Pro—For  
1933 azeine—ayein  
1934 hap—MS. haþe  
þe—ben  
1936 hap—MS. haþe  
helpe—help  
1937 say—sey

*quod* .I. ¶ Certis *quod* she *and* hym nedip no helpe yif he ne hadde no moneye þat he myzt[e] leese. ¶ þat is doutles *quod* .I. þanne is þis þing turned in to þe contrarie *quod* she ¶ For rycchesse þat men wenen sholde make suffisaunce. þei maken a man rapen han nede of foreine helpe. ¶ whiche is þe manere or þe gise *quod* she þat rycches may dryuen away nede. ¶ Riche folk may þei neiþer han hungre ne þrest. þise ryche men may þei feeþe no colde on hir lymes in wynter. ¶ But þou wilt answere þat ryche men han y-nouȝ wher wiþ þei may staunchen her hunger. *and* slaken her þrest *and* don away colde. ¶ In þis wise may nede be confortid by rycchesses. but certys nede ne may nat al outerly be don away. for þouȝ þis nede þat is alwey gapyng *and* gredy be fulfilled wiþ rycchesses. *and* axe any þing ȝit dwelleþ þanne a nede þat myzt[e] ben fulfilled. ¶ I holde me stille *and* telle nat how þat litel þing suffiseþ to nature. but certys to auarice ynouȝ ne suffiseþ no þinge. \*¶ For syn þat rychesse ne may nat al don away nede. but rychesse maken nede. what may it þanne be þat ȝe wenen þat rycchesses mowen ȝeuen ȝow suffisaunce.

1959

## QUAMUIS FLUENTER DIUES.

**A**l were it so þat a ryche couetous man hadde riuer fletynge alle of golde ȝitte sholde it neuer staunche hys couetise. ¶ And þouȝ he hadde his nekke l-charged wiþ preciose stones of þe rede see. *and* þouȝ he do erylle his feldeþ plentiuous wiþ an hundreþ oxen neuere ne shal his bytyng bysynesse forleten hym while he

cover their own of which they have been unjustly deprived ?

1940

B. Nothing is more true.

P. Then a man needs the assistance of others in order to keep his riches. If he had no money to lose he would not stand in need of this help ?

B. That is beyond all doubt.

P. Then the very reverse of what was expected

(from riches) takes place ? For

riches add to a man's necessities.

Tell me how do riches drive away

necessity ? Are not rich men liable

to hunger, thirst, and cold ? You

will say that the rich have wherewithal to

satisfy these wants. By riches

indigence may be alleviated, but

they cannot satisfy every want.

[\* fol. 17.]

Even if gaping and greedy necessity

be filled with riches, yet some

cravings will remain. A little

suffices for nature, but avarice never

has enough.

If riches, then, add to our wants,

why should you think that they

can supply all your necessities ?

[The 34<sup>e</sup> Metur.]

The rich man, had he a river of

gold, would never rest content.

Though his neck be loaded with

precious pearls, and his fields be

covered with in-

1938 *nedip*—no helpe—nedede  
non help

1939 *myzt[e]*—myhte

1940 *doutles*—dowleles

1941 *rycchesse*—Rychesses

1943 *helpe*—help

*whiche*—whyeh

1944 *rycches*—Rychesse

*dryuen*—dryue

1945 *hungre*—hungyr

*þrest*—thurst

1946 *þei*—the

*colde*—coold

*in*—on

1947 *wilt answere*—wolt

Answeren

*y-nouȝ*—y-nou

1948 *þrest*—thurst

1949 *colde*—coold

1950 *nat*—omitted

1951 *outerly*—vtrelȝ

1953 *myzt[e]* *ben*—myhte be

1957 *rycchesse*—Rychesses

1960 *riuer*—a Ryuer

1961 *alle*—al

*golde*—gold

*ȝitte*—ȝit

*staunche*—staunchyn

1962, 1963 *þouȝ*—thow

1964 *erylle*—Ere

*hundreþ*—hundred

1965 *while*—whyȝ

numerable herds,  
yet shall unquiet  
care never forsake  
him; and at his  
death his riches  
shall not bear  
him company.

<sup>1</sup> Read *dignitates*.

[The 4<sup>th</sup> prose.]  
It may be said  
that *dignities*  
confer honour on  
their possessors.  
But have they  
power to destroy  
vice or implant  
virtue in the  
heart?  
So far from ex-  
pelling vicious  
habits, they only  
render them more  
conspicuous.  
Hence arises the  
indignation when  
we see dignities  
given to wicked  
men.  
Hence Catullus'  
resentment  
against Nonius,  
whom he calls  
the botch, or im-  
postume of the  
State.

The deformities  
of wicked men  
would be less  
apparent if they  
were in more ob-  
scure situations.  
Would you free  
yourself from  
peril by accepting  
a magistracy  
along with De-  
coratus a buffoon  
and informer?

Honours do not  
render undeserv-  
ing persons  
worthy of esteem.  
If you find a man  
endowed with  
wisdom you

lyueþ. ne þe lyzt[e] rychesses ne shal nat beren hym  
compaignie whanne he is dede. 1967

# SET DIGNITATIBUS.<sup>1</sup>

**B**vt dignitees to whom þei ben comen make þei hym  
honorable *and* reuerent. han þei nat so grete strengþe  
þat þei may putte vertues in þe hertis of folk. þat vsen  
þe lordshipes of hem. or ellys may þei don away þe  
vices. Certys þei [ne] ben nat wont to don away wik-  
kednesses. but þei ben wont raper to shew[en] wikked-  
nesses. *and* þer of comeþ it þat I haue ryzt grete des-  
deyne. þat dignites ben zeuen ofte to wicked men.  
¶ For whiche þing catullus clepid a consul of Rome þat  
hyt nonius postum. or boch. as who seiþ he clepip  
hym a congregacioun of uices in his brest as a postum  
is ful of corrupcioun. al were þis nonius set in a

1980 chayere of dignitee. Sest þou nat þan how gret vylenye  
dignitees don to wikked men. ¶ Certys vnworþines of  
wikked men sholde ben þe lasse ysen yif þei nere re-  
nomed of none honours. ¶ Certys þou þi self ne  
myzttest nat ben brouzt wiþ as many perils as þou  
myzttest suffren þat þou woldest bere þi magistrat wiþ  
decorat. þat is to seyn. þat for no peril þat myzt[e] bi-  
fallen þe by þe offence of þe kyng theodorik þou noldest  
nat ben felawe in gouernaunce with decorat. whanne  
þou say[e] þat he had[de] wikkid corage of a likerous  
shrewe *and* of an acusor. ¶ Ne I ne may nat for swiche  
honours Iugen hem worþi of reuerence þat I deme *and*  
holde vnworþi to han pilke same honours. ¶ Now yif  
þou saie a man þat were fulfilled of wisdom. certys þou

1966 lyzt[e]—lyhte  
shal—shol  
1967 dede—ded  
1969 make—maken  
1969 grete—gret  
1972 [ne]—from C.  
ben—be  
1972, 1973 wikkednesses —  
wykkydnesse  
1973 to—omitted  
shew[en]—shewen  
1974 comeþ—comth

1974 grete desdeyne — gret  
desdaign  
1976 whiche—which  
1977 lyzt—lyhte  
nonius—MS. vonnus, C.  
nomyus  
boch—MS. bope, C. boch  
clepip—clepyd  
1979 nonius—MS uonnus, C.  
nomyus  
set—MS. sette, C. set  
1980 Sest þou—Sesthow

1980 þan—thanne  
vylenye—fylonye [ynessee  
1981 vnworþines—vnworth  
1982 ben—be  
ysen—MS. ysene, C. I-sene  
1984 many—manye  
1985 bere—beren  
1986 myzt[e]—myhte  
1987 þe (2)—omitted  
1988 whanne—whan  
1989 say[e]—saye  
had[de]—hadde

ne myztest nat demen þat he were vworpi to þe honour. or ellys to þe wisdom of whiche he is fulfilled.

No *quod* .I. ¶ Certys dignitees *quod* she appertien properly to vertue. and uertue transporteþ dignite anon to pilke man to whiche she hir self is conioigned.

¶ And for as moche as honours of poeple ne may nat maken folk digne of honour. it is wel seyn clerly þat þei ne han no propre beaute of dignite. ¶ And zit men

auzten take more hede in þis. ¶ For if it so be þat he is most out cast þat most folk dispisen. or as dignite ne may nat maken shrewes worpi of no reuerences. þan

makeþ dignites shrewes more dispised þan preised. þe whiche shrewes dignit[e] scheweþ to moche folk ¶ and for soþe nat vnpunissed. þat is forto sein. þat shrewes

reuengen hem azeinward vpon dignites. for þei zelden azein to dignites as gret gerdoun whan þei byspotten and defoulen dignites wiþ hire vylenie. ¶ And for as

moche as þou mow[e] knowe þat pilke verray reuerence ne may nat comen by þe shadowy transitorie dignitees. vndirstonde now þis. yif þat a man hadde vsed and

hadde many manere dignites of consules and were comen perauenture amonges straunge naciouns. sholde pilke honour maken hym worshipful and redouted of

straunge folk ¶ Certys yif þat honour of poeple were a naturel gifte to dignites. it ne myzte neuer cesen nowher amonges no maner folke to done hys office.

¶ Ryzt as fire in euery contre ne stinteþ nat to enchaufen and \*to ben hote. but for as myche as forto be holden honorable or reuerent ne comeþ nat to folk of

deem him worthy of respect and of the wisdom which he professes.

B. I could not do otherwise.

P. Virtue has her proper worth, which she ever transfers to her votaries.

Honours conferred by the populace do not make men worthy of them, for they have no intrinsic merit to bestow. Dignities conferred upon shrews only make their vices the more conspicuous.

Nor do dignities themselves escape without injury; for worthless men take their revenge upon them, and defile them by their contagious villainies.

2009

These shadowy honours have nothing in their nature to procure respect; for if a man, having borne the honours of the consulate, should go among barbarians would this honour gain him their respect?

2016

If respect were an attribute of honour it would infallibly bring esteem everywhere, just as heat is ever an attribute of fire.

[\* fol. 17 b.]

Honours arise from the false

1994 *demen*—deme  
1995 *whiche*—which  
1998 *quod she*—omitted  
1997 *vertue*—vertu  
1998 *whiche*—whych  
2000 *clerly*—MS. clerly, C.  
clerly  
2002 *auzten* — *hede* —  
owhten taken mor heed  
2002-3 *For*—*dignite*—*For*  
yif so be þat a wykkyd  
whyght be so mochel the  
fowlere and the moore

owt cast þat he is de-  
spised of most folk so as  
dignite  
2004-2007 *maken* — *soþe*—  
maken shrewes digne of  
Reuerence the whych  
shrewes dignete sheweth  
to moche foolk thanne  
makith dignete shrewes  
rather so moche more  
despised than preysed  
and forsoth  
2009 *zelden*—yilden  
2000 *byspotten*—by-spetten

2010 *hire*—hyr  
2011 *moche*—mochel  
2012 *be*—mowe  
2012 *be shadowy* — thyse  
shadowy  
2013 *vndirstonde* — vndyr-  
bis—thus [stond  
2014 *hadde*—had  
2018 *gifte*—yift  
2019 *folke*—foolk  
2019 *done*—don  
2021 *enchaufen* — eschaufen  
2021 *myche*—mochel  
2022 *be*—ben

opinions of men,  
and vanish when  
they come among  
those who do not  
esteem them, that  
is, among foreign  
nations.

2027

Do they always  
endure in those  
places that gave  
birth to them?

The Prætorate  
was once a great  
honour, but now  
it is only an  
empty name and  
a heavy expense.

What is more  
vile than the  
office of the  
superintendency  
of provisions?

That which hath  
no innate beauty  
must lose its  
splendour or  
value according  
as popular  
opinion varies  
concerning it.

If dignities can-  
not confer esteem,  
if they become  
vile through  
filthy shrews, if  
they lose their  
lustre by the  
change of times,  
if they become  
worthless by the  
change of popular  
opinion, what  
beauty do they  
possess which  
should make  
them desirable,  
or what dignity  
can they confer  
on others?

[The 4<sup>th</sup> Metur.]  
Nero, though in-  
vested with the  
purple and  
adorned with  
pearls, was hated  
by all men.

2023 *fals[e]*—false  
2024 *pat* (2)—omitted  
2027 *her*—*hyr*  
*vanissen*—*vanesshen*  
2028 *a-mong*—*amonges*  
*straung*—*straunge*  
*but*—*ne*  
2029 *pat*—*ther*  
*duren pilk[e]*—*ne duren*  
*nat thylke*  
2030 *somtyme*—*whylom*

2031 *grete*—*gret*  
2032 *pe* (3)—omitted  
2033 *somtyme*—*whylom*  
*pe*—*MS. pe be*  
2034 *corne*—*corn*  
*what*—omitted  
2035 *more noue*—*now more*  
2036 *cast*—*MS. caste, C. cast*  
2037 *seid*—*MS. seide, C. seyde*  
*here byforne*—*her by-forn*  
*hap*—*MS. haþe*

2042 *felþe*—*felthe*  
2043 *pat*—omitted  
2046 *auzte*—*owhte*  
*none*—*non*  
2047 *pei*—*MS. 3e, C. they*  
*none*—*non*  
2048 *al* (2)—*alle*  
2049 *kembde*—*kembde*  
*apparailled*—*MS. apparail*  
*en, C. a-paraylede*  
2050 *zitte*—*yit*

hir *propre strengþe* of nature. but only of *þe fals[e]*  
opinioun of folk. *þat* is to sein. *þat wenen þat dignites*  
maken folk *digne* of honour. An on þerfore whan *þat*  
*þei comen þer as folk ne knowen nat pilke dignites.*  
her honours vanissen away *and þat on oon.* but *þat* is  
a-mong *straung* folk. *maist þou sein.* but *amongus*  
hem *þat þei weren born duren pilk[e]* dignites alwey.  
¶ Certys *þe dignite of þe prouostrie of Rome* was som-  
tyme a grete power. now is it no þing but an ydel  
name. *and þe rente of þe senatorie a gret charge.* *and*  
yif a whizt somtyme hadde *þe office to taken he[de]* to  
þe vitailles of *þe poeple as of corne and what oper þinges*  
he was holden *amonges grete.* but what þing is more  
nowe out cast *þanne pilke prouostrie* ¶ And as I haue  
seid a litel here byforne. *þat pilke þing þat hap* no  
*propre beaute of hym self resceyueþ somtyme pris and*  
*shinyng and somtyme lesiþ it by þe opinioun of*  
*vsauces.* ¶ Now yif *þat dignites þanne ne mowen*  
*nat maken folk digne of reuerence.* *and yif þat dignites*  
*wexen foule of hir wille by þe filþe of shrewes.* ¶ and  
yif *þat dignites lesen hir shynynge by chaungyng of*  
*tymes.* and yif *þei wexen foule by estimacioun of*  
*poeple.* what is it *þat þei han in hem self of beaute*  
*þat auzte ben desired.* as who seiþ none. *þanne ne*  
*mowen þei 3iuen no beaute of dignite to none oper.* 2047

## QUAMUIS SE TIRIO.

Al be it so *þat þe proude nero wiþ al his woode luxurie*  
*kembed hym and apparailled hym wiþ faire purpers*  
*of Tirie and wiþ white perles.* Algates *zitte throf he*

hateful to alle folk ¶ pis is to seyn pat al was he by- 2051  
 hated of alle folk. ¶ zitte pis wicked Nero hadde gret  
 lordship *and* 3af somtyme to þe dredeful senatours þe  
 vnworshipful setes of dignites. ¶ vnworshipful setes  
 he clepiþ here fore pat Nero pat was so wikked 3af þo  
 dignites. who wolde þanne resonably wenen pat blysful-  
 nesse were in swiche honours as ben 3euen by vicious 2057  
 shrewes.

Yet he had lord-  
 ship, and gave to  
 the senators the  
 dishonoured seats  
 of dignity.  
 Who then can  
 think that felicity  
 resides in honours  
 given by vicious  
 shrews?

## AN UERO REGNA.

[The 5<sup>th</sup> prose.]

Bvt regnes *and* familiarites of kynges may þei maken a  
 man to ben myzty. how ellys. ¶ whanne hir  
 blysfulnesse dureþ perpetuely but certys þe olde age of  
 tyme passeþ. *and* eke of present tyme now is ful of en-  
 saamples how pat kynges pat han chaunged in to  
 wrechednesse out of hir welefulnesse. ¶ O a noble þing  
*and* a cler þing is power pat is nat founden myzty to  
 kepe it self. ¶ And yif pat power of realmes be auctour  
*and* maker of blisfulnesse. yif þilke power lakkeþ on  
 any side. amenusip it nat þilke blisfulnesse *and* bryngeþ  
 in wrechednesse. but yif al be it so pat realmes of man-  
 kynde stretchen broode. 3it mot þer nede ben myche  
 folk ouer whiche pat euery kyng ne haþ no lordshipe  
 ne comaundement ¶ *and* certys vpon þilke syde pat  
 power failleþ whiche pat makip folk blisful. ryzt on pat  
 same side nounpower entriþ vndirneþ pat makeþ hem  
 wreches. ¶ In þis manere þanne moten kynges han  
 more porciounz of wrechednesse þan of welefulnesse.  
 ¶ A tyraunt pat was kyng of sisile pat had[de] assaied  
 þe peril of his estat shewid[e] by similitude þe dredes  
 of realmes by gastnesse of a swerde pat heng ouer þe  
 heued of his familier. what þing is þan þis power pat

P. Do kingdoms  
 and a familiarity  
 with princes  
 make a man  
 mighty?  
 B. Why should  
 they not if they  
 are durable?  
 P. Past ages, as  
 well as the pre-  
 sent, furnish us  
 with many ex-  
 amples of princes  
 who have met  
 with diemal re-  
 verses of fortune.  
 O then how noble  
 and glorious a  
 thing is power  
 that is too weak  
 to preserve itself!  
 If dominion  
 brings felicity,  
 then misery will  
 follow if it be de-  
 fective.  
 But human rule  
 has its limits,  
 therefore wher-  
 ever power ceases  
 there impotence  
 enters, bringing  
 misery along  
 with it.

2074

Kings, therefore,  
 have a larger por-  
 tion of misery  
 than of felicity.

Dionysius of  
 Sicily, conscious  
 of this condition,  
 exhibited the  
 fears and cares of  
 royalty by the  
 terror of a naked  
 sword hanging

2053 *lordship*—lorshippe  
*3af somtyme*—yaf whylom  
*dredeful*—reuerencz  
 2055 *fore*—for: 3af—yaf  
 2060 *myzty*—MS. vmyzty,  
 C. myhty  
 2062 *passeþ*—passed  
 of (2)—omitted

2063 *kynges pat han* —  
 kynges ben  
 2066 *kepe*—kepen  
 2067 *maker*—makere  
 2069 *yif*—yit  
*realmes*—the Reaumes  
 2070 *stretchen*—streichchen  
*myche*—moche

2071 *hap*—MS. haþe  
 2073 *whiche*—whyche  
 2074 *endirneþ*—vndyr-nethe  
 2077 *had[de]*—hadde  
 2078 *shewid[e]*—shewede  
 2079 *realmes*—Reaumes  
*swerde*—sward  
*heng*—MS. henge, C. heng



over the head of his friend and flatterer Damocles. What then is this thing called [\* fol. 18.]

Power, which cannot do away with care or fear? Men would live in security but cannot, and yet they glory in their power. Is he powerful who cannot do what he wishes? Is he a mighty man who goes surrounded with an armed guard, to terrify those whom he himself fears, and whose power depends solely upon his numerous retinue? Why need I enlarge upon the favours of princes having thus displayed the imbecility of kings! Their prosperity is affected by the caprice of their fortunate masters as well as by the adversity to which

2098

they are incident. Nero only allowed his master Seneca to choose the manner of his death. Antonius (Carracalla) commanded Papinian to be slain by the swords of his soldiers. Yet both would have given up all they possessed. Seneca begged for poverty and exile. But relentless fortune precipitated them to destruction, and did not permit them to choose their fate. What then is Power, which terrifies its possessors, and which cannot be got rid of at pleasure? No advantage is to be gained by friend-

may nat don away þe bytynges of besines ne eschewe þe prikkes of drede. and certys ȝit wolden þei lyuen \*in sykernesse. but þei may nat. and ȝit þei glorifien hem in her power ¶ Holdest þou þan þat þilk[e] man be myzty þat þou seest þat he wolde don þat he may nat don. ¶ And holdest þou þan hym a myzty man þat haþ environed hise sydes wiþ men of armes or seruauentes and dredeþ more [hem] þat he makeþ agast. þen þei dreden hym. and þat is put in þe handes of hise seruauentz. for he sholde seme myzty but of familiers [or] seruauentz of kynges. ¶ what sholde I telle þe any þing. syn þat I my self haue shewed þe þat realmes hem self ben ful of gret feblesesse. þe whiche familiers certis þe real power of kynges in hool estat and in estat abated ful [ofte] þroweþ adoun. ¶ Nero constreined[e] his familier and his maistre seneca to chesen on what deep he wolde deien. ¶ Antonius comaundid[e] þat knyztis slown wiþ her swerdis Papinian his familier whiche Papinian had[de] ben long tyme ful myzty a-monges hem of þe courte. and ȝit certis þei wolde boþe han renounced her power. of whiche [two] senek enforced[e] hym to ȝiuen to Nero his rychesses. and also to han gon in to solitarie exil. ¶ But whan þe grete weyzt. þat is to sein of lordes power or of fortune draweþ hem. þat sholden falle. neyþer of hem ne myzt[e] do þat he wolde. what þing is þanne pilke power þat þou; men han it þat þei ben agast. ¶ and whan þou woldest han it þou nart nat siker. ¶ And yif þou woldest forleten it þou mayst nat eschewen it. ¶ But whepir swiche men ben frendes at nede as ben conseiled by fortune and nat by vertue. Certys swiche

2081 *besines*—byssynesse2083 *ȝit*—yif2084 *glorifien*—gloryfye2084 *þilk[e]*—thylke2087 *hap*—MS. hape2087 *environed*—enuyrownede

2088 [hem]—from C.

2089 *þen*—than

2091 [or]—from C

2092 *realmes*—Reames2093 *feblesesse*—feblesse2094 *real*—Ryal

2095 [ofte]—from C.

2096 *constreined[e]*—con-2096 *his* (1)—hyr [streynede]2096 *seneca*—Senek2097 *comaundid[e]*—com-2098 *her*—hyr [aundede]2099 *whiche*—which2099 *had[de]* *ben* *long*—þat

hadde ben longe

2100 *courte*—court2100 *wolde*—wolden

2101 [two]—from C.

2101 *enforced[e]*—enforcede2102 *ȝiuen*—yeuen2102 *his*—hyse2104 *weyzt*—weyhte2105 *sholden*—sholen2106 *myzt[e]*—myhte

folk as weleful fortune makeþ frendes. contrarious fortune makeþ hem enmyse. ¶ And what pestilence is more myzty forto anoye a wizt þan a familier enemy.

QUI SE UALET<sup>1</sup> ESSE POTENTEM. [Read *uolet*]

Who so wolde ben myzty he mot daunten hys cruel corage. ne put[te] nat his nekke ouercomen vnder þe foule reines of lecherie. for al be it so þat þi lordship[e] strecche so fer þat þe contre Inde quakip at þi comaundement. or at þi lawes. and þat þe leest isle in þe see þat hyzt tile be þral to þe ¶ 3it yif þou mayst nat puten away þi foule derk[e] desijres and dryuen oute fro þe wreched compleyntes. Certis it nis no power þat þou hast.

ship based on prosperity instead of virtue. Adversity will turn this sort of friendship into enmity. And what greater plague can there be than the enmity of thy familiar friend? [The 5th Metur.] He who would obtain sovereign power must obtain conquest over himself, and not yield to his passions. Though your dominion extended from India to Thule, yet if thou art tormented by care thou hast no real power.

2123

GLORIA UERO QUAM FALLAX.

Bvt glorie how deceiuable and how foule is it ofte. for whiche ping nat vnskilfully a tregedien þat is to sein a maker of dites þat hyzten tregedies cried[e] and seide. ¶ O glorie glorie quod he. þou nart no ping ellys to þousandes of folkes. but a gret sweller of eres. for many[e] han had ful gret renoun by þe fals[e] opinioun of poeple. and what ping may ben þouzt fouler þen swiche preisyng for þilk[e] folk þat ben preised falsly. þei moten nedes han shame of hir preisynges. and yif þat folk han geten hem þank or preysyng by her desertes. what ping haþ þilk pris echid or encresed to þe conscience of wise folk þat mesuren hire good. not by þe rumour of þe poeple. but by þe soþfastnesse of conscience. and yif it seme a fair ping a man to han encresid and sprad his name. þan folweþ

[The 6th prose.] How deceptive and deformed a thing is glory! Well did the Tragedian exclaim—  
ἀδόξα δόξα  
ὑπὸ τοῖσι δὴ  
βροτῶν, οὐδὲν  
ῥεῦσι βίοντος  
ἀγκυρᾶς μέγαν,  
for the underserving have been crowned with glory and renown by popular and erring opinion. What can be more infamous than renoun founded on the prejudices of the vulgar? Those that are undeservedly praised ought to blush for shame. If a wise man gets well-merited praise it does not add to his felicity. If it be a good thing to spread

2115 *wolde ben*—wole be  
2116 *put[te]*—putte  
2117 *lordship[e]*—lordshype  
2119 *comaundement*—  
maundement;  
*leest isle*—last ile  
2120 *hyzt*—hyhte  
2121 *puten*—putten  
*derk[e]*—dyrke

2122 *oute*—owt  
2124 *foule*—fowl  
2125 *whiche*—whyoh  
2126 *maker*—makers  
*cried[e]*—cryde  
2127 *he*—she  
2128 *sweller*—swellers  
2129 *many[e]*—manve  
*had*—MS. hadde, C. had

2129 *fals[e]*—false  
2130 *fouler*—fowlere  
2131 *ben*—thanne  
*þilk[e]*—thylke  
2133 *or*—of  
2134 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
*þilk*—thylke

abroad one's fame, it must be dishonourable not to do so. But a good name cannot penetrate everywhere, and the most illustrious names must be unknown to the greatest part of the world.

The favour of the people is worth but little as it is seldom judicious and [\* fol. 18 b.] never permanent. How empty and transitory are titles of nobility!

2150 Gentility is wholly foreign to renown, and to those who boast of noble birth. Nobility is fame derived from the merits of one's ancestors.

If praise can give nobility they are noble who are praised.

Then if thou hast no nobility of thy own, thou canst not derive any splendour from the merits of others.

If there be any good in nobleness of birth, it consists alone in this, that it imposes an obligation upon its possessors not to degenerate from the virtues of their ancestors.

[The 6th Metre.]

All men have the same origin. They have one father and one king, who gave the moon her horns, and adorned the sun with his rays. The same gave the earth to man

it. þat it is demed to ben a foule þinge yif it ne be ysprad ne encreased. but as I seide a litel her byforne. þat syn þer mot nedes ben many folk to whiche folk þe renoun of a man ne may nat comen. it byfalleþ þat he þat þou wenest be glorious *and* renommed. semip in þe nexte parties of þe erþe to ben wiþ out glorie. *and* wiþ out renoun. ¶ *¶* and certis amonges pise þinges I ne trowe nat þat þe pris *and* grace of þe poeple nis neiper worþi \*to ben remembrid ne comeþ of wise iugement. ne is ferm perdurably. ¶ But now of þis name of gentillesse. what man is it þat ne may wel seen how veyne *and* how flitting a þing it is. ¶ For if þe name of gentillesse be referred to renoun *and* clernesse of linage. þan is gentil name but a for[e]ine þing. þat is to sein to hem þat glorifien hem of hir linage. ¶ For it semeþ þat gentillesse be a maner preysynge þat comeþ of decert of auncestres. ¶ And yif preysynge makeþ gentillesse þan moten þei nedes be gentil þat ben preysed. For whiche þing it folweþ. þat yif þou ne haue no gentillesse of þi self. þat is to sein pris þat comeþ of þi deserte foreine gentillesse ne makeþ þe nat gentil. ¶ But certis yif þer be any goode in gentillesse. I trowe it be in al oonly þis. þat it semeþ as þat a maner necessitee be imposed to gentil men. for þat þei ne sholden nat outtraien or forliuen fro þe uertues of hire noble kynrede. 2163

## OMNE HOMINUM GENUS IN TERRIS.

A l þe linage of men þat ben in erþe ben of semblable burþe. On al one is fadir of þinges. On alone minyst[r]eþ alle þinges. ¶ He ʒaf to þe sonne hys bemes. he ʒaf to þe moone hir hornes. he ʒaf þe men to þe erþe. he ʒaf þe sterres to þe heuene. ¶ he encloseþ

2139 *foule þinge*—fowl thing  
2140 *ne and*  
*byforne*—byforn  
2141 *parties*—partye  
*erþe*—Erthes  
*out*—owte  
2145 *out*—owhte

2148 *form*—ferme  
2149 *veyne*—veyn  
2150 *if*—yif  
2154 *comeþ of*—comth of the  
2157 *whiche*—which  
2158 *pris*—preys  
*comeþ*—comth

2160 *goode*—good  
*in* (2)—omitted  
2161 *maner*—manere  
2166 *hys*—hyse  
2167 *hir*—hyse

wip membres þe soules þat comen fro hys heye sete.  
¶ þanne comen alle mortal folk of noble seed. whi  
noyssen 3e or bosten of 3oure eldris ¶ For yif þou  
look[e] 3oure bygyynyng. and god 3oure auctour and  
3oure makere. þan is þer no forlyued wyzt but 3if he  
norisse his corage vnto vices and forlete his propre  
burþe.

and adorned the  
sky with stars.  
He breathed into  
man the breath of  
life.  
All men spring  
from this illustri-  
ous source.  
Why then do they  
boast of pedigree?  
He alone is  
ignoble who sub-  
mits to vice and  
forgets his noble  
origin.

2175

QUID AUTEM DE CORPORIBUS.<sup>1</sup>

But what shal I seie of delices of body. of whic[h]e  
delices þe desiringes ben ful of anguisse. and þe  
fulfillinges of hem ben ful of penaunce. ¶ How grete  
sekenesse and how grete sorwes vnsuffrable ryzt as a  
manere fruit of wickednesse ben pilke delices wont to  
bryngen to þe bo[d]ies of folk þat vsen hem. ¶ Of  
whiche delices I not what ioye may ben had of hir  
moeuyng. ¶ But þis woot I wel þat who so euere wil  
remembren hym of hys luxuries. he shal wel vndir-  
stonde. þat þe issues of delices ben sorowful and sory.  
¶ And yif pilke delices mowen make folk blisful. þan  
by þe same cause moten pise bestes ben clepid blisful.  
¶ Of whiche bestes al þe entencioun hastep to fulfille  
hire bodyly iolyte. and þe gladnesse of wijf [and]  
children were [an] honest þing. but it hap ben seid.  
þat it is ouer myche azeins kynde þat children han ben  
foundeu tormentours to hir fadres I not how many.  
¶ Of whiche children how bitynge is enery condicioun.  
It nedep nat to tellen it þe pat hast or þis tyme assaid  
it. and art 3it now anguyssous. In þis approue I þe  
sentence of my disciple Euridippus. þat seide þat he  
pat hap no children is weleful by infortune.

[Read *corporis*  
*voluptatibus*.][The 7<sup>th</sup> prose.]

But what shall I  
say with respect  
to sensual plea-  
sures, the de-  
sire of which is  
full of anxiety,  
and the enjoy-  
ment of them full  
of repentance?  
What diseases  
and intolerable  
pains (the merited  
fruits of vice) are  
these delights  
wont to bring  
upon those who  
enjoy them?  
I am unable to  
see what joy is to  
be found in the  
gratification of  
them.  
The remembrance  
of criminal in-  
dulgence brings  
with it bitter  
remorse.  
If such things  
make men happy,  
then may brutes  
attain to felicity,  
since by their in-  
stinct they are  
urged to satisfy  
their bodily de-  
lights.  
A wife and chil-  
dren do not  
always bring hap-  
piness, for some  
have found tor-  
mentors in their  
own offspring.  
I approve of this  
opinion of Euri-  
pides, that he  
who is childless  
is happy in his  
misfortune.

2197

2169 *fro hys*—fram hyse  
2170 *seed*—sede  
2171 *bosten*—MS. vosen, C.  
bosten  
2172 *look[e]*—loke  
2173 *is*—nis  
2176 *delices*—delites  
*body*—bodye  
2177 *anguisse*—Angwyssh  
2178 *grete*—gret

2179 *sekenesse*—sykenesse  
*grete sorwes*—gret sorwes  
2180 *fruit*—frut  
2182 *had*—MS. hadde, C.  
had  
2183 *wil*—wole  
2184 *hys*—hyse  
2185 *sorowful*—sorwful  
*sory*—sorye  
2186 *make*—makyn

2189 [and]—from C.  
2190 [an]—from C.  
*hap*—MS. hape  
*seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
2191 *myche*—moohel  
2192 *many*—manye  
2196 *Euridippus*—Eury-  
dyppys; read Euripides  
2197 *hap*—MS. hape

## HABET HOC VOLUPTAS.

[The 7<sup>th</sup> Metur.]  
Pleasure leaves a  
pain behind it.

2199

The bee gives us  
agreeable honey,  
but try to hold it,  
and it quickly  
flies, leaving its  
sting behind.

Euery delit hap pis. þat it anguisseþ hem wip prikket  
þat vsen it. ¶ It resemblip to pise flying flyes þat  
we clepen been. þat aftre þat þe bee hap shed hys agre-  
able honies he fleep away and stynges þe hertes of hem  
þat ben ysmyte wip bytynge ouer longe holdynges. 2202

## NICHIL IGITUR DUBIUM EST.

[The 8<sup>th</sup> prose.]  
It appears then  
that happiness is  
not to be found in  
the above-men-  
tioned external  
things.

[\* fol. 19.]  
These false ways  
are perplexed  
with many evils,  
as I shall pre-  
sently show thee.  
Do you want to  
amass wealth,  
then you must  
take it from your  
neighbours.  
Would you shine  
in dignities, then  
you must beg for  
them and dis-  
grace yourself by  
a humiliating  
supplication.  
If power be your  
ambition, you  
expose yourself to  
the snares of  
inferiors.  
Do you ask for  
glory, to be dis-  
tracted by vexa-  
tions and so lose  
all security.  
Do you prefer a  
voluptuous life?  
Think then that  
all men will de-  
spise him who is  
a thrall to his  
body.  
They build upon  
a weak foundation  
that place  
bodily delights  
above their own  
reason.  
Can you surpass  
the elephant in  
bulk, or the bull  
in strength?

Now nis it no doute þan þat pise weyes ne ben a  
maner mysledyng to blisfulnesse. ne þat þei ne  
mowe nat leden folke pider as þei byheten to leden  
hem. ¶ But wip how grete harmes pise \*forseide weyes  
ben enlaced. ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. ¶ For whi  
yif þou enforcest þe to assemble moneye. þou most by-  
reuen hym his moneye þat hap it. and yif þou wilt  
shynen wip dignites. þou most bysechen and supplien  
hem þat ȝiuen þo dignitees. ¶ And yif þou coueitest  
by honour to gon by-fore oper folk þou shalt defoule þi  
self by humblesse of axing. yif þou desiryst power.  
þou shalt by awaites of þi subgitȝ anoyously be cast  
vndir many periles. axest þou glorie þou shalt ben so  
destrat by aspre pinges þat þou shalt forgone syker-  
nesse. ¶ And yif þou wilt leden þi lijf in delices.  
euery whiȝt shal dispisen þe and forleten þe as þou þat  
art þral to ping þat is ryȝt foule and brutel. þat is [to]  
sein seruauunt to þi body. ¶ Now is it þan wel yseen  
how lytel and how brutel possessioun þei coueiten þat  
putten þe goodes of þe body abouen hire owen resoun.  
¶ For mayst þou sourmounȝen pise olifuȝtȝ in gretnesse  
or weyȝt of body. Or mayst þou ben strengre þan þe  
bole. Mayst þou ben swifter þan þe tigre. biholde þe

2198 Euery—MS. Ouery, C.

Every

2199, 2200 hap—MS. hape

shed hys—shad hyse

2203 nis—is

2204 mysledyng — mysled-

ynges

2205 folke—folk

2208 enforcest — MS. en-

forced, C. enforcest

2209 hap—MS. hape

2209 wilt—wolt

2211 ȝiuen—ȝeuen

2212 gon—MS. gone, C. gon

by-fore—byforn

shalt—shal

2213 by—thorw

2214 by—be

be—ben

2216 destrat—MS. destralle,

C. destrat

forgone—forgoon

2217 wilt—wolt

2218 whiȝt—wyht

2219 foule—fowl

[fo]—from C.

2220 yseen—seen

2221 brutel—brotel

2222 owen—owne

2224 weyȝt—weyhty

stronger—strengere

2225 swifter—awyftere

biholde—by-hold

spaces *and* þe stablenesse *and* þe swyfte cours of þe  
heuene. *and* stynte somtyme to wondren on foule  
þinges. þe whiche heuene certys nis nat raper for þise  
þinges to ben wondred vpon. þan for þe resoun by  
whiche it is gouerned. but þe shynynge of þi forme þat  
is to seien þe beaute of þi body. how swiftly passyng is  
it *and* how transitorie. ¶ Certis it is more flittyng  
þan þe mutabilite of floures of þe somer sesoun. For so  
as aristotil telleþ þat yif þat men hadden eyen of a  
beest þat hiȝt lynx. so þat þe lokyng of folk myȝt[e]  
percen þoruȝ þe þinges þat wiȝstonden it. who so lokid  
þan in þe entrailes of þe body of alcibiades þat was  
ful fayr in þe superfice wiȝ oute. it shulde seme ryȝt  
foule. *and* for þi yif þou semest faire. þi nature ne  
makip nat þat. but þe desceinaunce of þe fieblesse of þe  
eyen þat loken. ¶ But preise þe goodes of þi body as  
moche as euer þe list. so þat þou know[e] algates þat  
what so it be. þat is to seyn of þe goodes of þi body  
whiche þat þou wondrest vpon may ben destroyed or  
dessolued by þe hete of a feuere of þre dayes. ¶ Of  
alle whiche forseide þinges I may reducen þis shortly in  
a somme. ¶ þat þise worldly goodes whiche þat ne  
mowen nat giuen þat þei byheten. ne ben nat perfit by  
þe congregacioun of alle goodes. þat þei ne ben nat  
weyes ne papes þat bryngen men to blysfulnesse ne  
maken men to ben blysful.

Art thou swifter  
than the tiger?  
Behold the im-  
mense extent of  
the heavens and  
cease to admire  
vile or lesser  
things.  
Admire what is  
still more admir-  
able, the consum-  
mate wisdom that  
governs them.  
How fleeting is  
beauty!  
It fades sooner  
than the vernal  
flowers.  
For, as Aristotle  
says, if a man  
were lynx-eyed  
and could look  
into the entrails  
of Alcibiades (so  
fair outwardly)  
he would find all  
foul and loath-  
some.

2238

Thy nature does  
not make thee  
seem beautiful,  
but the imperfect  
view of thy ad-  
mirers.  
Prize bodily  
perfections as  
much as you will,  
yet a three days'  
fever will de-  
stroy them.

2246

Worldly goods do  
not give what  
they promise, do  
not comprise  
every good, are  
not the paths to  
felicity, nor can  
of themselves  
make any one  
happy.

2251

HEU QUE MISEROS TRAMITE.

Alas whiche folie *and* whiche ignoraunce mysledip  
wandryng wrecches fro þe pape of verrey good.  
¶ Certis ȝe ne seken no golde in grene trees. ne ȝe ne

[The 8<sup>th</sup> Metur.]  
Alas! how  
through folly and  
ignorance do men  
stray from the  
path of true  
happiness!

2227 *styn*te—stynt  
2228 *whiche*—whyȝh  
2230 *whiche*—whyȝh  
2231 *seien*—seyn  
2234 *as*—omitted  
2235 *hiȝt*—hyȝte  
2236 *myȝt[e]*—myȝte  
2237 *alcibiades*—MS. alci-  
2238 *fayr*—fayre [ades]

2238 *þe*—omitted  
*shulde*—sholde  
2239 *foule*—fowl  
*fayre*—fayr  
*ne*—omitted  
2240 *desceinaunce* of þe  
*feblesse*—deceyuable or  
the feblesse  
2242 *moche*—mochel

2242 *know[e]*—knowe  
2243 *þe*—omitted  
*þi body whiche*—the body  
whyȝh  
2247 *a*—omitted  
2252 *whiche* (both)—whyȝh  
2253 *pape*—paath  
*good*—goode  
2254 *golde*—gold

Ye do not seek  
gold upon trees  
nor diamonds  
from the vine.  
Ye lay not your  
nets to catch fish  
upon the lofty  
hills.  
The hunter goes  
not to the Tyr-  
rene waters to  
hunt the roe.  
Men know where  
to look for white  
pearls, and for the  
fish that yields the  
purple dye.

gadren [nat] precious stones in þe vines. ne 3e ne  
hiden nat 3oure gynnes in hey3e mountaignes to kachen  
fisshe of whiche 3e may maken ryche festes. and yif  
3ow lykep to hunte to roos. 3e ne gon nat to þe foordes  
of þe water þat hyzt tyrene. and ouer þis men knowen  
wel þe crikes and þe cauernes of þe see yhidd in þe  
floodes. and knowen eke whiche water is most plentiuos  
of white perles. and knowen whiche water habundep  
2263 most of rede purpre. þat is to seyen of a maner shel-

They know where  
the most delicate  
of the finny race  
abound and where  
the fierce sea-urch-  
in is to be found.  
But where the  
Sovereign Good  
abides blinded  
mortals never  
know, but plunge  
into the earth  
below to look for  
that which has its  
dwelling in the  
heavens.

[\* fol. 19 b.]  
What doom do the  
silly race deserve?  
May they pursue  
such false joys,  
and having ob-  
tained them, too  
late find out the  
value of the true.

fisshe with whiche men dien purpre. and knowen  
whiche strondes habounden most of tendre fisshes or  
of sharpe fisshes þat hyzten echynnys. but folk suffren  
hem self to ben so blynde þat hem ne recchip nat to  
knowe where pilk[e] goodes ben yhidd whiche þat þei  
coueiten but ploungen hem in erpe and seken pere  
pilke goode þat sourmountep þe heuene þat bereþ þe  
sterres. ¶ what \*preyere may I make þat be digne to  
þe nice pouztis of men. but I preye þat þei coueiten  
ryches and honours so þat whan þei han geten þo  
false goodes wiþ greet trauayle þat þerby þei mowe  
knownen þe verray goodes. 2275

## HACTENUS MENDACIS FORMAM.

[The 9<sup>th</sup> prose.]

P. I have been  
describing the  
form of counter-  
feit happiness, and  
if you have con-  
sidered it at-  
tentively I shall  
proceed to give  
you a perfect view  
of the true.

B. I now see that  
there is no suffi-  
ciency in riches, no  
power in royalty,  
no esteem in  
dignities, nor  
nobility in re-

IT suffisip þat I haue shewed hider to þe forme of  
false wilfulnesse. so þat yif þou look[e] now clerely  
þe ordre of myn entencioun requerip from hennes forþe  
to shewen þe verray wilfulnesse. ¶ For quod .I. (b) [I.]  
se wel now þat suffisaunce may nat comen by richesse. ne  
power by realmes. ne reuerence by dignitees. ne gentil-  
esse by glorie. ne ioye by delices. and (p) hast þou wel  
knownen quod she þe cause whi it is. Certis me semeþ

2256 hey3e—the hye  
kachen—kache  
2257 fleshe—fyssh  
2258 hunte—honte  
roos—Rooses  
2259 hyzt—hyhte  
2260 crikes—brykes  
yhidd—MS. yhidde, C. I.  
hyd  
2261, 2262 whiche—whyche

2263 shelleshe—shelle fysh  
2264, 2265 whiche—whyche  
2264 dien—deyen  
2265 of—with  
2266 echynnys—MS. eth-  
ynnys, C. Echynnys  
2266 yhidde—MS. yhidde, C.  
I-hydd  
2270 goode—good  
2271 make—maken

2273 ryches—Rychesse  
2277 wilfulnesse—weleful-  
nesse  
look[e]—loke  
clerely—clerly [nesse]  
2279 wilfulnesse—weleful-  
For—For-sothe  
[I.]—from C.  
2280 richesse—Rychesses  
2281 realmes—Reames

*quod* .I. þat .I. se hem ryzt as þouȝ it were þoruȝ a lital clifte. but me were leuer knowen hem more openly of þe. Certys *quod* she þe resoun is al redy ¶ For þilk þing þat symply is on þing wiþ outen ony diuisioun. þe errour *and* folie of mankynde departeþ *and* diuidiþ it. *and* mislediþ it *and* transporteþ from verray *and* perfit goode. to goodes þat ben false *and* inperfit. ¶ But seye me þis. wenest þou þat he þat hap nede of power þat hym ne lakkeþ no þing. Nay *quod* .I. ¶ Certis *quod* she þou seist aryzt. For yif so be þat þer is a þing þat in any partie be fieble of power. Certis as in þat it most[e] nedes be nedy of foreine helpe. ¶ Riȝt so it is *quod* .I. Suffisaunce *and* power ben þan of on kynde ¶ So semeþ it *quod* .I. ¶ *And* demyst þou *quod* she þat a þing þat is of þis manere. þat is to seine suffisaunt *and* myȝty auȝt[e] to ben dispised. or ellys þat it be ryzt digne of reuerences abouen alle þinges. ¶ Certys *quod* I it nys no doute þat it nis ryzt worþi to ben reuerenced. ¶ Lat vs *quod* she þan adden reuerence to suffisaunce *and* to power ¶ So þat we demen þat þise þre þinges ben alle o þing. ¶ Certis *quod* I lat vs adden it. yif we willen graunten þe soþe. what demest þou þan *quod* she is þat a dirke þing *and* nat noble þat is suffisaunt reuerent *and* myȝty. or ellys þat is ryzt clere *and* ryzt noble of celebrete of renoun. ¶ Considere þan *quod* she as we han grauntid her byforne. þat he þat ne hap ne[de] of no þing *and* is most myȝty *and* most digne of honour yif hym nedip any clernesse of renoun whiche clernesse he myȝt[e] nat graunten of hym self. ¶ So þat for lakke of þilke clerenesse he myȝt[e] seme febler on any syde or þe

noun, nor joy in carnal pleasures. I have a glimpse of the cause of all this, but I should like a more distinct view. P. The cause is obvious—for that which is by nature one and indivisible human ignorance separates and divides, and reverses the true order of things. Does that state which needs nothing stand in need of power? B. I should say no. P. Right! That which wants power needs external aid. B. That is true! P. Sufficiency and power therefore are of one nature. B. It seems so indeed. 2297

P. Are power and sufficiency to be despised? Are they not rather worthy of universal respect? B. They are doubtless highly estimable. P. Add respect to sufficiency and power, and consider all three as one and the same thing. B. I see no objection to that view. P. But can that be obscure and ignoble which possesses three such attributes? is it not noble and worthy of a shining reputation? He who is most powerful and worthy of renown—if he lack fame which he cannot give to himself, must (by this defect) seem in some measure more weak and abject. He that is sufficiently mighty and esteemed will have necessarily

2287 *þilk*—thylke  
on—o  
2290 *goode*—good  
2291 *seye*—sey  
hap—MS. hape  
2294 *feble*—feblers  
2295 *most[e]*—mot  
2296 *helpe*—help  
2297 on—o

2298 *demyst þou*—demesthow  
2299 *seine*—seyn  
auȝt[e]—owhte  
2300 *reuerences*—Reuerence  
2302 *nis ryzt*—is ryht  
2304 *alle*—al  
2305 *willen*—wolen  
2306 *dirke*—dyrk  
2308 *clere*—cler

2308 *of celebrete*—by celebrete  
2310 *hap*—MS. hape  
2312 *whiche*—whych  
myȝt[e]—myhte  
2314 *clerenesse*—clernesce  
myȝt[e]—myhte  
febler—the feblers



an illustrious name. *B.* I cannot deny it, for reputation seems inseparable from the advantages you have just mentioned.

*P.* Therefore Renown differs in no wise from

2320

the three above-mentioned attributes. And if any one then stands in need of no external aid, can have all he wants, and is illustrious and respected—is not his condition very agreeable and pleasant? *B.* I cannot conceive how such a one can have grief or trouble. *P.* It must then be a state of happiness; and we may also affirm that sufficiency, power, nobility, differ only in name, but

2330

not in substance. *B.* It is a necessary consequence. *P.* The depravity of mankind then divides that which is essentially indivisible; and, seeking for a part of that which has no parts, they miss the entire thing [\* fol. 20.] which they so much desire.

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*B.* How is that? *P.* He that seeks riches in order to avoid poverty, is not solicitous about power; he prefers meanness and obscurity, and denies himself many natural pleasures that he may not lessen his heaps of pelf.

more outcaste. *Glosa.* *pis* is to *seyne* nay. ¶ For who so *pat* is suffisaunt *myzty* and reuerent. clernesse of renoun folweþ of þe forseide pinges. he haþ it alreþy of hys suffisaunce. boice. I may nat quod I denye it. ¶ But I mot graunten as it is. *pat* *pis* ping be ryzt celebrable by clernesse of renoun and noblesse. ¶ *pan* folweþ it quod she *pat* we adden clernesse of renoun to þe pre forseide pinges. so *pat* þe ne be amonges hem no difference. and *pis* is a consequente quod .I. *pis* ping *pan* quod she *pat* ne haþ no nede of no foreine ping. and *pat* may don alle pinges by his strengþes. and *pat* is noble and honourable. nis nat *pat* a myrie ping and a ioyful. boice. but wenest quod I *pat* any sorow *myzt[e]* comen to *pis* ping *pat* is swiche. ¶ Certys I may nat pinke. *P.* ¶ *panne* moten we graunt[e] quod she *pat* *pis* ping be ful of gladnesse yif þe forseide pinges be soþe. ¶ And also certys mote we graunten. *pat* suffisaunce power noblesse reuerence and gladnesse ben only dyuerse bynames. but hir substaunce haþ no diuersite. Boice. It mot nedely be so quod .I. *P.* pilke ping *pan* quod she *pat* is oon and simple in his nature. þe wikkednesse of men departiþ it \*diuidiþ it. and whan þei enforcen hem to gete partie of a ping *pat* ne haþ no part. þei ne geten hem neiþer pilk[e] partie *pat* nis none. ne þe ping al hole *pat* þei ne desire nat. .b. In whiche manere quod .I. *p.* pilke man quod she *pat* sekeþ rychesse to fleen pouerte. he ne traunyaþ hym nat to for to gete power for he haþ leuer ben dirk and vile. and eke wiþdraweþ from hym selfe many naturel delit; for he nolde lesen þe moneye *pat* he haþ as-

2315 *seyne*—seyn

2317 *haþ*—MS. haþe

2324 *haþ*—MS. haþe

2325 *his*—hyse

2326 *myrie*—mery

2327 *wenest*—whennes

2328 *sorow myzt[e]*—sorwe

*myhte*

2329 *graunt[e]*—graunte

2331 *be*—ben

2331 also *certys*—certes also

2333 *haþ*—MS. haþe

2334 *nedely*—nedly

2335 *pinge*—thing

2337 *gete*—geten

2338 *haþ*—MS. haþe

*pilk[e]*—thilke

2339 *none*—non

*hole*—hool

2340 *whiche*—whyh

2341 *rychesse*—Rychesses

*fleen*—MS. sleen, C. fien

2342 *leuer*—leuer

2343 *vile*—ryl

*selfe*—self

2344 *delit*—delices

*lesen*—lese

*haþ*—MS. haþe

sembled. but certis in þis manere he ne getiþ hym nat  
suffisaunce þat power forletiþ. and þat moleste prekeþ.  
and þat filþe makeþ outcaste. and þat derknesse hideþ.  
and certis he þat desireþ only power he wastiþ and  
scatriþ rychesse and dispiseþ delices and eke honour  
þat is wiþ out power. ne he ne preiseþ glorie no þing.

¶ Certys þus seest þou wel þat many þingus failen to  
hym. for he haþ somtyme faute of many necessites.

and many anguysses biten hym ¶ and whan he may  
nat don þo defautes away. he forletiþ to ben myzty.

and þat is þe þing þat he most desireþ. and ryzt þus  
may I make semblable resouns of honours and of glorie  
and of delices. ¶ For so as euery of þise forseide

þinges is þe same þat þise oþer þinges ben. þat is to  
sein. al oon þing. who so þat euer sekeþ to geten þat  
oon of þise and nat þat oþer. he ne geteþ nat þat he  
desireþ. Boice. ¶ what seist þou þan yif þat a man

coueiteþ to geten alle þise þinges to gider. P. Certys  
quod she .I. wolde seie þat he wolde geten hym soue-  
reyn blisfulnes. but þat shal he nat fynde in þo þinges

þat .I. haue shewed þat ne mowe nat zeuen þat þei hy-  
heten. boice. Certys no quod .I. ¶ þan quod she ne  
sholden men nat by no weye seken blysfulnesse in

swiche þinges as men wenen þat þei ne mowe  
zeuen but o þing senglely of alle þat men seken. I  
graunt[e] wel quod .I. ne no soþer þing ne may nat

ben said. P. ¶ Now hast þou þan quod she þe forme  
and þe causes of false welefulnesse. ¶ Now turne and  
flitte þe eyen of þi þouzt. for þere shalt þou seen an oon

pilk verray blysfulnesse þat I haue byhyzt þee. b.  
Certys quod .I. it is cler and opyn. þouzt þat it were to  
a blynde man. and þat shewedest þou me [ful wel] a

He who lacks power, is pricked with trouble, and rendered an outcast and obscure by his sordid ways, does not possess sufficiency. He who only aims at power squanders his riches, and despises delights and honours unaccompanied by power. Such a one must be subject to many anxieties. And when he cannot get rid of these evils he ceases to have what he most desired—power. In the same way honour, glory, and pleasure, are all inseparable; he that seeks one without the other will fail to obtain his desires. B. What then if a man should desire to gain them all at once? P. He would then indeed  
2361

desire perfect felicity—but can he ever expect to find it in the acquisitions above mentioned, which do not perform what they promise? B. No, surely! P. Then happiness is not to be sought in these things which are falsely supposed capable of satisfying our desires? B. I confess it, and nothing can be more truly affirmed than this. Turn your mind's eye upon the reverse of all this false felicity and you will perceive the true happiness. B. It is very clear, and I had a complete view of it when you explained to me the causes of its counterfeit.

2346 prekeþ—prykketh  
2347 derknesse—dyrkenesse  
2349 scatriþ—schatereth  
delices—delycy  
2350 wiþ out—with owte  
2351 many—manye  
2352 haþ—MS. haþe

2353 faute—defaute  
2353 may—ne may  
2354 don—MS. done, C. don  
2356 make—maken  
2357 forseide—MS. sorseide  
2363 souereyne—souereyn  
2365 mowe—mowen

2368 wenen—wene  
mowe—mowen  
2370 graunt[e]—graunte  
soþer—sothire  
2371 said—MS. saide, C. sayd  
2376 [ful wel]—from C.

True felicity consists in a state of sufficiency, of power, and honour—as well as of a shining reputation and every desirable pleasure: and I must confess that true felicity is that which is bestowed by these advantages, as they are in reality all one and the same.  
P. O my nursing, how happy are

2385

you in this conviction, provided you add but one limitation.

B. What is that?  
P. Thinkest thou that any thing in this world can confer this happiness? (the sovereign good).

B. I think not; for nothing can be desirable beyond such a state of perfection.

P. These imperfect things above mentioned only confer the shadow of the supreme good, or at most only an imperfect felicity, but they cannot bestow true and perfect happiness.

B. I quite agree with you.

P. Then, knowing the difference between true and false felicity you must now learn where to look for

2401

this supreme felicity.

P. But, as Plato

[\* fol. 20 b.] says that even in the least things the Divine assistance ought to be implored, what ought we do, to render us worthy of so important a discovery as the true source and seat of the sovereign good?

lytel her byforne. whan þou enforcedest þe to shewe me þe causes of þe false blysfulnesse ¶ For but yif I be bygiled. þan is pilke þe verray perfit blisfulnesse þat perfitly makip a man suffisaunt. myzty. honourable noble. and ful of gladnesse. and for þou shalt wel knowe þat I haue wel vndirstonden pise pinges wij inne myne herte. I knowe wel pilke blisfulnesse þat may verrayly zeuen on of þe forseide pinges syn þei ben al oon .I. knowe douteles þat pilke ping is þe fulle of blysfulnesse. P.

O my nurry quod she by þis oppinioun quod she I sey[e] þat þou art blisful yif þou putte þis per to þat I shal seine. what is þat quod .I. ¶ Trowest þou þat þer be any ping in þis erpely mortal toubmbyng pinges þat may bryngen þis estat. Certys quod I trowe it nat. and þou hast shewed me wel þat ouer pilke goode þer is no ping more to ben desired. P. pise pinges þan quod she. þat is to seyne erpely suffisaunce and power. and swiche pinges eyþer þei semen likenesse of verray goode. or ellys it semeþ þat þei zeuen to mortal folk a maner of goodes þat ne ben nat perfit. ¶ But pilke goode þat is verray and perfit. þat may þei nat zeuen. boice. I. accomde me wel quod .I. þan quod she for as moche as þou hast knowen whiche is pilke verray blisfulnesse. and eke whiche pilke pinges ben þat lien falsly blisfulnesse. þat is to seyne. þat by desceit semen verray goodes. ¶ Now byhouep þe to knowen \*whennes and where þou mowe seek[e] pilke verray blisfulnesse. ¶ Certys quod I þat desijr I gretly and haue abiden longe tyme to herkene it. ¶ But for as moche quod she as it likeþ to my disciple plato in his book of in thimeo. þat in ryzt lytel pinges men sholde bysechen þe helpe of god. ¶ what iugest þou þat be

2377 byforne—by-form

2378 blysfulnesse — MS. blyndenesse, C. blysfulnesse

2385 of—omitted

2386 nurry—norye

2387 sey[e]—seye

2388 seine—seyn

2389 þis—thise

2390 nat—nawht

2393 seyne—sey

2395 zeuen—yeue

2397 goode—good

2399 whiche—which

2401 seyne—seyn

2402 knowen—knowe

2403 seek[e]—seke

2405 herkene—herknen

2407 sholde—sholden

2408 bysechen—by-shechen

helpe—help

[now] to done so pat we may deserue to fynde þe sete of pilke souereyne goode. *B.* ¶ Certys quod .I. I. deme pat we shulle clepen to þe fadir of alle goodes. ¶ For wiþ outen hym nis þer no ping founden aryzt. þou seist a-ryzt quod she. and bygan on-one to syngen ryzt þus.

## O QUI PERPETUA.

O þou fadir creatour of heuene *and* of erþes pat gouernest þis worlde by perdurable resoun pat com-aundist þe tymes for to gon from tyme pat age had[de] bygynnyng. þou pat dwellest pi self ay stedfast *and* stable *and* ȝiuest alle oþer þinges to ben moeued. ne forein causes necesseden þe neuer to compoune werke of floterynge mater. but only þe forme of souereyne goode y-set wiþ inne [þe] wiþ outen envie þat moeued[e] þe frely. þou pat art alþerfairest beryng þe faire worlde in pi þouȝt. formedest þis worlde to þe likkenesse semblable of þat faire worlde in pi þouȝt. þou drawest alle þinges of pi souereyne ensampler. *and* comaundedist þat þis worlde perfitlyche ymaked haue frely *and* absolut hyse perfit parties. ¶ þou byndest þe elementȝ by noumbres proporcionables. þat þe colde þinges mowen accorde wiþ þe hote þinges. *and* þe drye þinges wiþ þe moyst þinges. þat þe fire þat is purest ne fleye nat ouer heye. ne þat þe heuynesse ne drawe nat adoun ouer lowe þe erþes þat ben plounged in þe watres. ¶ þou knytttest to-gidre þe mene soule of treble kynde moeuyng alle þinges. *and* diuidest it by membres accordyng. ¶ And whan it is þus diuided it hap assembled a moeuyng in two roundes. ¶ It goþ to tourne

*B.* Let us invoke the Father of all things. You are right, said Philosophy, and thus she sang:—

O Father and Maker of heaven and earth, by whose eternal reason the world is governed, and by whose supreme [The 9<sup>th</sup> Metur.] command Time flows from the birthofages, Thou, firm and unchanged thyself, makest all things else to move! Thy sovereign will to floating matter gave its various forms, impelled by no exterior causes, but by the Idea of the

2419

Best in thy great mind conceived void of malice. Fairest thyself bearing the world's figure in thy thought, thou didst create the world after that prototype, and dost draw all things from the image of the fair Supreme, and dost command that this world should have perfect parts. By harmonious measures thou dost bind fast the elements, so that there is no discordance between things cold and hot, or between the moist and the dry. That the fire may not fly too high, and that weight may not press the earth and water lower than they are now placed, thou didst join the Middle Soul (of a threefold nature) moving all things, and then by agreeing

2409 [now]—from C.  
2410 souereyne goode—verray  
good  
2411 shulle—shollen  
to—omitted  
2413 on-one—anon  
2415 worlde—world  
2416 from—age—from syn  
pat age  
had[de]—hadde  
2417 stedfast—stedefast

2418 oþer—oother  
2419 forein—foreyne  
werke—werk  
2420 souereyne goode—soue-  
rcyn good  
2421 y-set—MS. y-sette, C.  
Iset  
wiþ inne—with in  
[þe]—the  
wiþ outen—with owte  
moeued[e]—moeuede

2422 alþerfairest — alder-  
fayrest  
2422-24-26 worlde—world  
2423 likkenesse—lyknesse  
2426 *and* absolut—C. omits  
2427 hyse—hys  
2430 fre—fyr  
fleye—flic  
2431 drawe—drawen  
2435 hap—MS. hape  
2436 goþ—MS. goþe

numbers didst resolve it. When that is done, cut into two orbe, it moves about returning to itself, and then encompassing the profound mind doth by that fair idea turn the heaven. Thou by such causes dost raise all souls and lesser lives, and adaptest them to their light vehicles. Thou sowest them in heaven and earth, and they return to thee by thy kind law like a recoiling flame. O Father, elevate our souls and let them behold thy august throne. Let them behold the fountain of all good. Dispel the mists of sense, remove the weights of earth-born cares, and in thy splendour shine (in our minds). For thou art ever clear, and to the [The 10<sup>th</sup> prose.] good art peace and rest. He who looks on thee beholds beginning support, guide, path and goal, combined. Now that thou hast had a faithful representation of future felicity as well as of the true happiness, I shall show thee in what the Perfection of Happiness consists. Our best plan will be to inquire whether there be in nature such a good as thou hast lately defined, lest we be deceived by the vanity of Imagination and be carried beyond the truth of the matter subjected to our inquiry.

azein to hym owen self. *and* environeþ a fulle deep þouzt. *and* tourniþ þe heuene by semblable ymage. þou by euenlyk causes enhaunsest þe soules *and* þe lasse liues *and* ablynge hem heye by lyzt[e] cartes. þou sewest hem in to heuene *and* in to erþe. *and* whan þei ben conuertid to þe by þi benigne lawe. ¶ þou makest hem retorne azeine to þe by azein ledyng fjr. ¶ O fadir yif þou to þi þouzt to stien vp in to þi streite sete. *and* graunte [hym] to enviroune þe welle of good. *and* þe lyzte yfounde graunte hym to ficchen þe clere syztes of hys corage in þe. ¶ And scatre þou *and* to-breke [thow] þe weyztēs *and* þe cloudes of erþely heynesne. *and* shyne þou by þi bryztēs. for þou art clernesne þou art peisible to debonaire folke. ¶ þou þi self art by-gynnynge. berere. ledere. paþ *and* terme to loke on þe [þat] is oure ende. *Glose.*

2452

QUONIAM IGITUR QUI SCIT.<sup>1</sup> [1 Read que sit.]

FOR as moche þan as þou hast seyn. whiche is þe forme of goode þat nys nat perfit. *and* whiche is þe forme of goode þat is perfit. now trowe I þat it were goode to shewe in what þis perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. *and* in þis þing I trowe þat we sholden first enquere forto witen yif þat any swiche manere goode as pilke goode þat þou hast diffinissed a lytel her byforne. þat is to seine souereyne goode may be founden in þe nature of pinges. For þat veyne ymaginacioun of þouzt ne desceiue vs nat. *and* putte vs oute of þe soþefastnesse of pilke þinge þat is summyttid to vs. þis is to seyne. but it may nat ben denoyed þat pilke goode ne is. ¶ *and* þat it nis ryzt as a welle of alle goodes. ¶ For

2437 *owen*—C. omits  
2438 *tourniþ*—MS. *tourniþe*  
2439 *euenlyk*—euene lyke  
2440 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte  
2442 *benigne*—bygynnynge  
2444 *yif*—yue  
2445 *þi streite*—the streyte  
2446 [hym]—from C.  
2446 *lyzte*—lyht

2448 [thow]—from C.  
2449 *bryztēs*—bryhtnesse  
2451 *paþ*—MS. *pape*; *paath*  
2452 [þat]—that  
2453 *whiche*—which [good]  
2454 - 55 - 56 - 58 - 59 *goode*—  
2454 *whiche*—whyh  
2457 *set*—MS. *sette*, C. *set*  
2460 *seine*—seyn

2460 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good  
2460 *be founden*—ben fownde  
2461 *veyne*—veyn  
2463 *þis is to seyne*—C. omits  
2464 *denoyed*—MS. *deuoyd*, C. *denoyed*  
2464 *goode*—good  
2465 *of*—MS. of of

al þing þat is cleped inperfit. is proued inperfit by þe amenusynge of perfeccioun. or of þing þat is perfit. and her of comep it. þat in euery þing general. yif þat. þat men seen any þing þat is inperfit \* certys in þilke general þer mot ben somme þing þat is perfit. ¶ For yif so be þat perfeccioun is don away. men may nat pinke nor seye fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped inperfit. ¶ For þe nature of þinges ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and inperfit. but it procediþ of þingus þat ben al hool. and absolut. and descendep so doune in to outertest þinges and in to þingus empty and wip oute fruyt. but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne. þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse þat be frele and vein and inperfit. þer may no man doute. þat þer nys som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and perfit. b. þis is concludid quod I fermely and sopefastly. P. But considere also quod she in wham þis blisfulnesse enhabiteþ. þe commune acordaunce and conceite of þe corages of men prouep and graunteþ þat god prince of alle þingus is good. ¶ For so as no þing ne may ben þouzt bettre þan god. it may nat ben doutid þan þat [he þat] no þing is bettre. þat he nys good. ¶ Certys resoun shewep þat god is so goode þat it prouep by verray force þat perfit goode is in hym. ¶ For yif god ne is swiche. he ne may nat ben prince of alle þinges. for certis som þing possessyng in hym self perfit goode sholde ben more þan god. and [it] sholde seme þat þilke þing were first and elder þan god. ¶ For we han shewed apertly þat alle þinges þat ben perfit. ben first or þinges þat ben inperfit. ¶ And for þi for as moche as [that] my resoun or my proces ne go nat away wipoute an ende. we ouzt[e] to graunten þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of

The sovereign good does exist, and is the source of all other good. When we say that a thing is imperfect we

[fol. 21.] assert that there is something else of its kind perfect. Nature takes not her origin from things diminished and imperfect; but, proceeding from an entire and absolute substance, descends into the remotest and most fruitless things. If there be an imperfect and fading felicity there must also be one stable and perfect. But now consider wherein this felicity resides. That God is the governor of all things is proved by the universal opinion of all men. For since nothing may be conceived better

2482 than God, then He who has no equal in goodness must be good. Reason clearly demonstrates (1) that God is good, and (2) that the sovereign good exists in him. If it were not so He could not be the Ruler of all things, for there would be some other being excelling him who possesses the supreme good and who must have existed before Him. And we have already shown that the perfect precedes the imperfect; wherefore, that our reasonings may not run on with infinity, we must confess that the Supreme God is full of perfect and consummate good.

2466 al þing—alle thing  
2468 her of comep—ther of comht  
2470 somme—som  
2471 don—MS. done, C. don  
2473 taken—took  
2475 hool—hoole  
2476 doune—down

2477 wip oute fruyt—with owten frut  
2480 stedfast—stydfast  
2481 fermely—MS. feunely, C. fermely  
sopefastly—sothfastly  
2486 [he þat]—from C.  
is bettre—nis bettre

2488-89-91 goode—good  
2489 swiche—swych  
2492 [it]—from C.  
seme—semen  
2493 elder—eldere  
2495 [that]—from C.  
2496 proces—processes  
2497 ouzt[e]—owen

And as we have seen that the perfect good is true happiness, it follows that the true felicity resides in the Supreme Divinity. But let us see how we can firmly and irrefragably prove that the Supreme God contains in his own nature a plenitude of perfect and consummate good. If you think that God has received this good from without, then you must believe that the giver of this

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good is more excellent than God the receiver. But we have concluded that there is nothing more excellent than God. But if this supreme good is in Him by nature, and is nevertheless of a different substance, we cannot conceive, since God is the author of all things, what could have united these two substances differing one from another. Lastly, a thing which essentially differs from another cannot be the same with that from which it is supposed to differ. Consequently, what in its nature

2522

differs from the chief good cannot be the supreme good. But it would be impious and profane thus to conceive of God, since nothing can excel Him in goodness and worth.

souereyne perfit goode. and we han establisshed þat þe souereyne goode is verrey blisfulnesse. þan mot it nedes ben [þat verray blysfulnesse is] yset in souereyne god.

*B.* þis take I wel quod .I. ne þis ne may nat be wiþseid in no manere. ¶ But I preie þe quod she see now how þou mayst preuen holily and wiþ-outen corrupcioun þis þat I haue seid. þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of souereyne goode. [In whych manere quod I.] wenest þou ouzt quod she þat þis prince of alle þinges haue ytake þilke souereyne good any where þan of hym self.

¶ of whiche souereyne goode men proueþ þat he is ful ryzt as þou myztest pinken. þat god þat haþ blisfulnesse in hym self. and þat ilke blisfulnesse þat is in hym were diuers in substaunce. ¶ For yif þou wene þat god haue receyued þilke good oute of hym self. þou mayst wene þat he þat 3af þilke good to god. be more goode þan is god. ¶ But I am byknowen and confesse and þat ryzt dignely þat god is ryzt worpi abouen alle þinges. ¶ And yif so be þat þis good be in hym by nature. but þat it is diuers from [hym] by wenyng resoun. syn we speke of god prince of alle þinges feyne who so feyne may. who was he þat [hath] conioigned pise diuers þinges to-gidre. and eke at þe last[e] se wel þat o þing þat is diuers from any þing. þat þilke þing nis nat þat same þing. fro whiche it is vndirstonden to ben diuers. þan folweþ it. þat þilke þing þat by hys nature is dyuers from souereyne good. þat þat þing nys nat souereyne good. but certys þat were a felonous corednesse to pinken þat of hym. þat no þing nis more worpe. For alwey of alle þinges. þe nature

2498 *goode*—good2499 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good2500 [þat—*is*]—from C.*yset*—MS. ysette, C. set2501 *be*—ben*wiþseid*—MS. wiþseide,

C. withseid

2503 *wiþ-outen*—with-owte2504 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyd2505 *souereyne goode*—soue-

reyn good

2505 [*In—I*]—from C.2506 *ouzt*—awht2507 *þan of*—owt of2508 *whiche*—whyche*souereyne goode*—souereyn

good

2509 *hāþ*—MS. hāpe2510 *þat ilke*—thilke2511 *were*—weren2514 *goode*—worth2517 *from*—fro[*hym*]—from C.2518 *feyne*—faigne2519 *feyne*—feigne[*hath*]—from C.2520 *last[e]*—laste2521 *o—a*2522 *whiche*—whyche2524 *from*—fro2527 *nis*—is

of hem ne may nat ben better þan his byggunyng.  
¶ For whiche I may concluden by ryȝt uerray resoun.  
þat þilke þat is byggunyng of alle þinges. þilke same  
þing is good in his substaunce. *B.* þou hast seid ryȝt-  
fully quod .I. *P.* But we han graunted quod she þat  
souereyne good is blysfulnes. þat is soþe quod .I. þan  
quod she mote we nedes graunten *and* confessen þat  
þilke same souereyne goode be god. ¶ Certys \*quod  
.I. I ne may nat denye ne wiȝstonde þe resouns pur-  
posed. and I see wel þat it folweȝ by strengþe of þe  
premisses. ¶ Loke nowe quod she yif þis be proued  
[yit] more fermely þus. ¶ þat þer ne mowen nat ben  
two souereyne goodes þat ben diuerse amo[n]ges hem  
self. þat on is nat þat þat oþer is. þan [ne] mowen  
neiȝer of hem ben perfit. so as eyȝer of hem lakkip to  
oþir. but þat þat nis nat perfit men may seen apertly  
þat it nis nat souereyne. þe þinges þan þat ben  
souereynely goode ne mowen by no wey ben diuerse.  
¶ But I haue wel conclude þat blisfulnesse *and* god ben  
[the] souereyne goode. For whiche it mot nedes be þat  
souereyne blisfulnesse is souerey[ne] dyuynite. ¶ No  
þing quod I nis more soþefast þan þis ne more ferme by  
resoun. ne a more worþi þing þan god may nat ben  
concluded. *P.* vpon þise þinges þan quod she. ryȝt as  
þise geometriens whan þei han shewed her proposiciouns  
ben wont to bryngen in þinges þat þei clepen porismes  
or declaraciouns of förseide þinges. ryȝt so wil I zeue  
þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune. For whi.  
for as moche as by þe getyng of blisfulnesse men ben  
makid blysful. *and* blisfulnesse is diuinite. ¶ þan is  
it manifest *and* open þat by þe getyng of diuinite men  
ben makid blisful. ryȝt as by þe getyng of iustice . . .

In fact, nothing  
can exist whose  
nature is better  
than its origin.  
We may therefore  
conclude that the  
Author of all  
things is really  
and substantially  
the supreme Good.  
*B.* Most rightly  
said!

*P.* But you have  
owned that true  
felicity is the sove-  
reign good; then  
you must also

[\* fol. 21 b.]  
grant that God is  
that true felicity.  
*B.* Your conclu-  
sions follow from  
your premises.

*P.* Let us see  
whether we can-  
not prove this  
more convincingly  
by considering it  
in this view, that  
there cannot be  
two sovereign  
goods which differ  
in themselves.  
For it is plain that  
of the goods that  
differ one cannot  
be what the other  
is; wherefore  
neither of them

2545

can be perfect  
where one wants  
the other. That  
which is not per-  
fect cannot be the  
supreme good.  
Neither can the  
chief good be  
essentially differ-  
ent. But it has  
been shown that  
God and happi-  
ness are the chief  
good, wherefore  
the sovereign  
felicity and the  
Supreme Divinity  
are one and the  
same. Following  
then the examples  
of geometricians  
who deduce their  
consequences  
from their propo-  
sitions, I shall de-  
duce to thee  
something like a  
corollary as fol-  
lows:—Because by  
the attainment of  
felicity men be-  
come happy, and

2528 *better*—bettle  
2529 *whiche*—whyche  
2531 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
2533 *soþe*—soth  
2534 *mote*—moten  
2539 [yit]—from C.  
2541 *is* (1)—nis

2541 *oþer*—othre  
[ne]—from C.  
2546 *conclude*—concludid  
2547 [the] from C.  
*goode*—good *be*—ben  
2549 *soþefast*—sothfast  
*ferme*—MS. forme, C.

*ferme*  
2552 *proposiciouns*—MS.  
proporsiouns, C. propo-  
siciouns  
2553 *porismes*—MS. poeismes,  
C. porysmes  
2554 *wil*—wole



as felicity is the same as Divinity itself, therefore by the attainment of Divinity men are made happy. But as by the participation of justice or of wisdom men become just or wise, so by partaking of Divinity they must necessarily, and by parity of reason, become gods. Every happy man then is a god. But by nature there is only *One*; but by participation of Divine essence there may be many gods. But as happiness seems to be an assemblage of many things, ought we not to consider whether these several things constitute conjointly the body of

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happiness, or whether there is not some one of these particular things that may complete the substance or essence of it, and to which all the rest have a relation?

*B.* Illustrate this matter by proper examples.

*P.* As you grant that happiness is a good, you may say the same of all the other goods; for perfect sufficiency is identical with supreme felicity; so is supreme power, likewise high rank, a shining reputation, and perfect pleasure. What say you, then; are all these things, sufficiency, power, and the rest, to be considered as constituent parts of felicity? or are they to be referred to the sovereign good as their source and principal?

2563 *oon*—o  
2564 *letteþ*—let  
2566 *faire*—fayr  
2567 *porisme*—MS. pousme,  
C. porisme  
2572 [*þat*]—from C.  
2573 *maner*—manere  
by—be

2574 [*of*]—from C.  
2575 *swyche*—swych  
2576 *oper*—oother  
2577 *seyne*—seyn  
2578 *chief*—chief  
2581 *goode* *zis*—good ys  
2583 *souereyne goode*—*souereyn* good

2583 *goode*—good  
2585 *self*—selue  
2588 *þise*—C. omits  
*seyne*—seyn  
2589 *oper*—oother  
2591 *brouzt*—MS. wrouzt, C.  
browht

and by þe getyng of sapience þei ben made wise. ¶ Ryzt so nedes by þe semblable resoun whan þei han getyn diuinite þei ben made goddys. þan is euery blisful man god. ¶ But certis by nature. þer nys but oon god. but by þe participaciouns of diuinite þere ne letteþ ne disturbeþ no þing þat þer ne ben many goddes. ¶ þis is quod .I. a faire þing and a precious. ¶ Clepe it as þou wolt. be it corolarie or porisme or mede of coroune or declarynges ¶ Certys quod she no þing nis fairer. þan is þe þing þat by resoun sholde ben added to þise forseide þinges. what þing quod .I. ¶ So quod she as it semeþ þat blisfulnesse contenip many þinges. it were forto witen whepir [*þat*] alle þise þinges maken or conioignen as a maner body of blysfulnesse by diuersite of parties or [*of*] membris. Or ellys yif any of alle pilke þingus be swyche þat it acomplise by hym self þe substaunce of blisfulnesse. so þat alle þise oper þinges ben referred and brouzt to blisfulnesse. þat is to seyne as to þe chief of hem. ¶ I wolde quod I þat þou makedest me clerly to vndirstonde what þou seist. and þat þou recorderst me þe forseide þinges. ¶ Haue I nat iuged quod she. þat blisfulnesse is goode. zis forsoþe quod .I. and þat souereyne goode. ¶ Adde þan quod she pilke goode þat is maked blisfulnes to alle þe forseide þinges. ¶ For pilke same blisfulnesse þat is demed to ben souereyne suffisaunce. pilke self is souereyne power. souereyne reuerence. souereyne clernesse or noblesse and souereyne delit. what seist þou þan of alle þise þinges. þat is to seyne. suffisaunce power and þise oper þinges. ben þei þan as membris of blisfulnesse. or ben þei referred and brouzt to souereyne good. ¶ Ryzt as alle þinges þat ben brouzt to þe chief of hem.

b. I vnderstonde wel quod .I. what þou purposest to seke. but I desijr[e] to herkene þat þou shewe it me.  
 p. Take now þus þe discressioun of þis questioun quod she. yif al þise þinges quod she weren membris to felicite. þan weren þei diuerse þat oon fro þat oþer.  
 ¶ And swiche is þe nature of parties or of membris. þat dyuerse membris compounen a body. ¶ Certis quod I it hap wel ben shewed her byforne. þat alle þise þinges ben alle on þing. þan ben þei none membris quod she. for ellys it sholde seme þat blisfulnesse were conioigned \*al of one membre alone. but þat is a þing þat may nat ben doon. þis þing quod .I. nys nat doutous. but I abide to herkene þe remenaunt of þe questioun. þis is open and clere quod she. þat alle oþer þinges ben referred and brouȝt to goode. ¶ For þerfore is suffisaunce requered. For it is demed to ben good. and forþi is power requered. for men trowen also þat it be goode. and þis same þing mowe we þinken and coueiten of reuerence and of noblesse and of delit. þan is souereyne good þe soume and þe cause of alle þat auzt[e] be desired. forwhi pilke þing þat wiþ-holdeþ no good in it self ne semblaunce of goode it ne may nat wel in no manere be desired ne requered. and þe contrarie. For þouȝ þat þinges by hir nature ne ben nat goode algates yif men wene þat þei ben goode ȝit ben þei desired as þouȝ [þat] þei were verrayly goode. and þerfore is it þat men auzten to wene by ryȝt þat bounte be souereyne fyn and þe cause of alle þinges þat ben to requeren. ¶ But certis pilke þat is cause for whiche men requeren any þing. ¶ it semeþ þat pilke same þing be most desired. as þus yif þat a wyȝt wolde ryde for cause of hele. he ne desireþ nat so mychel þe

B. I see what you are aiming at, and I am desirous to hear your arguments.

P. If all these things were members of felicity, they would differ one from another, for it is the property of diverse parts to compose one body. But it has been well shown that all these things are the same and do not differ—therefore they are not parts, for if they were, happiness might be made up of one member—which is absurd and impossible.

B. This I doubt not, but I desire to hear the sequel.

P. All the things above-mentioned must be tried by

2607

Good, as the rule and square.

Sufficiency, power, &c., are all desired, because they are esteemed a good. Good is the cause why all things are desired. For that which contains no good, either in reality or appearance, can never be desired. On the contrary, things not essentially good are desired because they appear to be real goods.

Hence, Good is esteemed as the cause and end of all things that we desire.

That which is the cause of our desiring any thing is itself what we chiefly want. If a man desire to ride on account of health—it is not the ride he wants so much as its salutary effects.

2593 *desijr[e] to herkene*—desire for to herkne  
 2594 *Take*—tak  
 2596 *fro*—from  
 2597 *swiche*—swhych  
 2600 *on þing*—othing  
 2602 *one*—on  
 2603 *ben doon*—be don

2604 *herkene*—herknen  
 2605 *clere*—cler  
*oþer*—oother  
 2606 *goode*—good  
 2609 *goode*—good  
*mowe*—mowen  
 2617 [*þat*]—from C.  
*were verrayly* — weeren

*verraylyche*  
 2618 *þerfore*—therfor  
*auȝten*—owhten  
 2619 *alle*—alle the  
 2620 *whiche*—whych  
 2623 *mychel*—moche

Since all things  
are sought after  
for the sake of  
Good, they cannot  
be more desirable  
than the good it-  
self. It has been  
shown that all the  
aforesaid things  
are only pursued  
for the sake of

2629  
happiness—hence  
it is clear that  
good and happi-  
ness are essen-  
tially the same.  
B. I see no cause  
to differ from you.  
P. It has been  
proved that God  
and happiness are  
identical and  
inseparable.  
B. That is true.  
Therefore the sub-  
stance of God is  
also the same as  
that of the  
Supreme Good.

[The 10<sup>th</sup> Metur.]  
Come hither, all  
ye that are  
captives—bound  
and fettered  
with the chains  
of earthly  
desires;—come  
to this source of  
goodness, where  
you shall find rest  
and security.  
[Chaucer's gloss

2642  
upon the Text.]  
Not the gold of  
Tagus or of Her-  
mus, nor the  
gems of India,  
can clear the  
mental sight from  
vain delusions,  
but rather  
darken it.  
Such sources of  
our delight are  
found in the  
earth's gloomy  
caverns,—  
but the bright  
light that rules  
the heavens  
dispels the dark-  
ness of the soul.  
He who has seen  
this light will  
confess that the  
beams of the sun  
are weak and dim.

moeuyng to ryden as þe effect of his heele. Now þan  
syn þat alle þinges ben required for þe grace of good.  
þei ne ben [nat] desired of alle folk more þan þe same  
good ¶ But we han graunted þat blysfulnesse is þat  
þing for whiche þat alle þise oþer þinges ben desired.  
þan is it þus þat certis only blisfulnesse is requered *and*  
desired ¶ By whiche þing it sheweþ clerely þat good  
*and* blisfulnesse is al oone *and* þe same substaunce.  
¶ I se nat quod I wher fore þat men myȝt[en] discorden  
in þis. *p. and* we han shewed þat god *and* verrey blys-  
fulnesse is al oon þing ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. þan  
mowe we conclude sikerly þat þe substaunce of god is  
set in þilke same good *and* in noon oþer place. 2636

## NUNC OMNES PARITER ETC.

O Comeþ alle to-gidre now ȝe þat ben ycauȝt *and*  
ybounde wiþ wicked[e] cheines by þe deceiuable  
delit of erþely þinges inhabytynge in ȝoure pouȝt. here  
shal ben þe reste of ȝoure laboures. here is þe hauene  
stable in peisible quiete. þis al oone is þe open refut to  
wreches. *Glosa.* þis is to seyn. þat ȝe þat ben com-  
bred *and* deceyued wiþ worldly affeccions comeþ now  
to þis souereyne good þat is god. þat is refut to hem þat  
wolen come to hym. *Textus.* ¶ Alle þe þinges þat þe  
ryuere Tagus ȝiueþ ȝow wiþ his golden[e] grauels. or  
ellys alle þe þynges þat þe ryuere hermus. ȝiueþ wiþ his  
rede brynke. or þat yndus ȝiueþ þat is nexte þe hote  
partie of þe worlde. þat medeleþ þe grene stones  
(smaragde) wiþ þe white (margarits). ne sholde nat  
cleren þe lokynge of ȝoure þoȝt. but hiden rapen ȝoure  
blynde corages wiþ inne hire dirkenesse ¶ Alle þat  
likeþ ȝow here *and* excitip *and* moeueþ ȝoure þoȝtes.

2624 *moeuyng*—moeuyngne  
2626 [nat]—from C.  
2628 *oper*—oothre  
2630 *clerely*—clerly  
good *and* blisfulnesse—of  
good *and* of blysfulnesse  
2631 *oone*—oon  
2632 *myȝt[en]*—myhten  
2634 *oon*—oo

2634 *soþe*—soth  
2635 *mowe*—mowen  
2636 *set*—MS. sette, C. set  
2638 *wicked[e]*—wyckyde  
2639, 2640 *hero*—her  
2640 *hauene*—MS. heuene,  
C. hauene  
2641 *al oone*—allone  
2643 *worldly*—worldcly

2645 *come*—comyn  
2646 *golden[e] grauels*—  
goldene grauayles  
2647 *þynges*—MS. rynges, C.  
things  
*hermus*—MS. herinus, C.  
herynus  
2648 *nexte*—next  
2649 *worldis*—world

þe erþe haþ noryshed it in hys lowe caues. but þe shynnyng by þe whiche þe heuene is gouerned *and* whennes þat it haþ hys strengþe þat chaseþ þe derke ouerþrowyng of þe soule. ¶ And who so euer may knowen pilke lyzt of blisfulnesse. he shal wel seine þat þe white bemes of þe sonne ne ben nat cleer. 2659

## ASSENCIOR IN QUAM CUNCTA. Boice.

I assent[e] me quod .I. For alle pise þinges ben strongly bounden wiþ ryzt ferme resouns. how mychel wilt þou preisen it quod she. yif þat þou knowe what pilke goode is. I wol preise it quod I by price wiþ outen ende. ¶ yif it shal bytyde me to knowe also to-gidre god þat is good. ¶ certys quod she þat shal I do þe by verray resoun. yif þat þo þinges þat I haue conclude[d] a litel her by \*forne dwellen onoly in hir first[e] grauntyng. Boice. þei dwellen graunted to þe quod .I. þis is to seyne as who seiþ .I. graunt þi forseide conclusiouns. ¶ Hauē I nat shewed þe quod she þat þe þinges þat ben requered of many folke. ne ben nat verray goodes ne perfit. for þei ben diuerse þat oon fro þat oper. *and* so as eche of hem is lakkyng to oper. þei ne han no power to bryngen a good þat is ful *and* absolute. ¶ But þan atte arst ben þei verray good whan þei ben gadred to-gidre al in to a forme *and* in to oon wirchyng. so þat pilke þing þat is suffisaunce. pilk same be power *and* reuerence. *and* noblesse *and* mirþe. ¶ And forsoþe but alle pise þinges ben alle o same þing þei ne han nat wher by þat þei mowen ben put in þe noumbre of þinges. þat auzten ben requered or desired. b. ¶ It is shewed quod .I. ne her of may þer no man douten. p. þe þinges þan quod she þat ne

B. I assent, and am convinced by the force of your arguments.  
P. But how greatly would you value it, did you fully know what this good is?

B. I should value it infinitely if at the same time I might attain to the knowledge of God, who is the sovereign good.

[The 11 prose.]

P. I shall elucidate this matter by incontrovertible reasons if thou wilt grant me those things which I have before laid down as conclusions.

B. I grant them all.

P. Have I not shown that the things which the majority of mankind so eagerly

[\* fol. 22 b.] pursue are not

2668

true and perfect goods, for they differ from one another; and because where one of them is absent the others cannot confer absolute happiness (or good)? Have I not shown, too, that the true and chief good is made up of an assemblage of all the goods in such a way, that if sufficiency is an attribute of this good, it must at the same time possess

2678

power, reverence, &c. If they be not one and the same, why should they be classed among desirable things?

While these things differ from one another they are not goods;

2654, 2656 *hap*—MS. *haþe*  
2654 *hys*—*hyse*  
2656 *chaseþ þe derke*—*eschueth the dyrke*  
2657 *euer*—C. omits  
2658 *seine*—*seyn*  
2660 *assent[e]*—*assente*  
2662 *mychel*—*mochel*

2663 *goode*—*good*  
2664 *price*—*prys*  
2669 *is*—omitted  
*seyne*—*seyn*  
2671 *folke*—*folkes*  
2673 *oper*—*oothre*  
*ech*—*ech*  
2675 *absolute*—*absolut*

2675 *atte arst*—*at erste*  
2676 *al*—*alle*  
*a*—*O*  
2677 *to*—omitted  
*wirchyng*—*wyrkyng*  
2678 *pilk*—*thilke*  
2681 *put*—MS. *putte*, C. *put*  
*auzten*—*owhten*

but as soon  
as they become  
one then they  
are made goods.—  
Do not they owe  
their being good  
to their unity?  
B. So it appears.  
P. Do you confess  
that everything  
that is good be-  
comes such by  
the participation  
of the sovereign  
good or no?  
B. It is so.  
P. Then you must  
own that unity  
and good are the  
same (for the sub-  
stance of those  
things must be  
the same, whose  
effects do not na-  
turally differ). B. I  
cannot gainsay it.  
P. Do you not per-  
ceive that every-  
thing which ex-  
ists is permanent  
so long as it pre-  
serves its unity—  
but as soon as it  
loses this, it is dis-  
solved and anni-  
hilated?

2700

B. How so?  
P. In the animal  
creation as long as  
the soul and the  
body are united  
and conjoined in  
one, this being  
is called an animal  
or beast, but  
when the union  
is dissolved by the  
separation of  
these, the animal  
perishes and is  
no longer a beast.  
The same may be  
said of man and  
all other things;  
they subsist while  
unity is preserved,  
but as soon as that  
is destroyed the  
things themselves  
lose their  
existence.  
B. I believe we  
should find this  
true in every case.  
P. Is there any-  
thing which acts  
naturally that for-  
goes this desire of  
existence and  
wishes for death  
and corruption?

ben none goodes whan þei ben diuerse. *and* whan þei  
bygynnen to ben al o þing. þan ben þei goodes. ne  
comiþ it hem nat þan by þe getyng of unite þat þei ben  
maked goodes. *b.* so it semeþ quod .I. but alle þing þat  
is good quod she graunteþ þou þat it be good by par-  
ticipacioun of good or no. ¶ I graunt[e] it quod .I.  
¶ þan mayst þou graunt[en] it quod she by sembleable  
resoun þat oon *and* good ben o same þing. ¶ For of  
þinges [of] whiche þat þe effect nis nat naturely diuerse  
nedys þe substaunce mot ben o same þinga. I ne may  
nat denye it quod I. ¶ Hast þou nat knowen wel quod  
she. þat al þing þat is haþ so longe his dwellyng *and*  
his substaunce. as longe is it oone. ¶ but whan it  
forletip to ben oone it mot nedis dien *and* corruppe to-  
gidre. ¶ In whiche manere quod .I. ¶ Ryzt as in  
beestes quod she. whan þe soule *and* þe body ben  
conioigned in oon *and* dwellen to-gidre it is cleped a  
beest. *and* whan hire vnite is destroyed by disseueraunce  
þat oon fram þat opir. þan sheweþ it wel þat it is a  
dede þing. *and* þat it is no lenger no beste. *and* þe  
body of a wyzt while it dwelleþ in oon forme by con-  
iunctioun of membris it is wel seyn þat it is a figure of  
mankynde. *and* yif þe partyes of þe body ben [so]  
diuide[d] *and* disseuered þat oon fro þat opir þat þei  
destroien vnite. þe body forletip to ben þat it was by-  
forne. ¶ And who so wolde renne in þe same manere  
by alle þinges he sholde seen þat wiþ outen doute euery  
þinge is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon. *and*  
whan it forletip to ben oon it dieþ *and* perissip. *voice.*  
whan I considre quod I many þinges I see noon oper.  
¶ Is þer any þing þanne quod she þat in as moche as  
it lyueþ naturely. þat forletip þe appetit or talent of

2684 none—no  
2685 al o—alle oon  
2686 comiþ—comth  
2689 graunt[e]—graunte  
2690 mayst þou graunt[en]  
moethow grauten  
2692 [a]—from C.

2695 al—alle  
hab—MS. haþe  
2696, 2697 oone—oon  
2698 whiche—which  
2703 dede—ded  
lenger—lengere  
beste—beest

2704 while—whil  
oon—oo  
2706 [so] diuide[d]—so de-  
uydyd  
2709 so—omitted  
2713 many—many

hys beynge. *and* desirþ to come to deef *and* corrupcioun. ¶ yif I considere *quod* I þe beestes þan any manere nature of willynge or of nillynge I ne fynde no þing. but yif it be constreyned fro wip out forþe. þat forletip or dispiseþ to lyue *and* to duren or þat wole his þankes hasten hym to dien. ¶ For euery beest trauayleþ hym to defende *and* kepe þe sauacioun of lijf. *and* escheweþ deef *and* destruccioun. b. but certys I doute me of herbes *and* of trees. þat is to seyn þat I am in a doute of swiche pinges as herbes or trees þat ne han no felyng soule. ne no naturel wirchynges seruyng to appetite as beestes han wheþer þei han appetite to dwellen *and* to duren. ¶ Certis *quod* she ne þer of þar þe nat doute. ¶ Now look vpon pise herbes *and* pise trees. þei waxen firste in swiche place as ben couenable to hem. in whiche place þei ne mowen nat sone dien ne dryen as longe as hire nature may defenden hem. ¶ For some of hem waxen in feldes *and* some in mountaignes. *and* opir waxen in mareis. [*A leaf lost here, and supplied from C.*] 2735 [*and* oothre cleuyn on Roches / *and* soume waxen plentyuous in sondes / *and* yif þat any wyht enforce hym to beryn hem in to oother places / they wexen drye // For nature yeueth to euery thing þat / þat is conuenient to hym *and* trauaylith þat they ne dye nat as longe as they han power to dwellyn *and* to lyuen // what woltow seyn of this / þat they drawen alle hyr norysshynges by hyr rootes / ryht as they haddyn hyr Mowthes I-plounged with in the erthes / *and* shedyn by hyr maryes (i. medullas) hyr wode *and* hyr bark / *and* what woltow seyn of this þat thilke thing / þat is ryht softe as the marye (i. sapp) is / þat is alwey hidd in the feete al with inne *and* þat it is defendid fro with owte by the stidefastnesse of wode // *and* þat the vttereste bark is put ayenis the des-

B. I do not find any creature endowed with volition, which, of itself and without constraint, renounces or despises life and self-preservation or willingly hastens to destruction. But with regard to herbes and trees, I am doubtful whether

2723  
ther I ought to have the same opinion of them, for they have no sensitive soul, nor any natural volition like animals. P. There is no cause for doubt in respect to these. Herbes and trees first choose a convenient place to grow in, where, agreeably to their respective natures, they are sure to thrive, and are in no danger of perishing; for some grow on plains, some on mountains, &c.; and if you try to transplant them, they forthwith wither and die. To every thing that vegetates, nature gives what is needful for its subsistence, and takes care that they should not perish before their time. Need I tell you that plants are nourished by their roots (which are so many mouths hid in the earth), and diffuse strength throughout the whole plant, as through their marrow? And further, it is admirably contrived that the pith, the most tender part of plants, is hid in the middle of the trunk, surrounded with hard and solid wood, and with an outer coat of bark to ward off the storms and weather.

2718 *willynge*—wyllynge  
or—*and*  
2719 *þing*—beest  
out forþe—owte forth

2720 *lyue*—lyuen  
2723 *of lijf*—of hys lyf  
2726 *soule*—sowles  
2727 *appetite*—appetites

2729 *look*—loke  
2730 *axen*—*firste*—wexen  
2733, 2734 *some*—som [fyrst  
2734 *opir*—oothre

Admire, too,  
the diligence

2751 of nature in propagating plants by a multiplicity of seeds, which are as a foundation for a building, not to remain for a time, but as it were for ever. Things inanimate incline to what is most suitable to their beings, and to preserve continuance. For why should the flame mount upwards by lightness, and the earth tend towards its centre by gravity

2761 (weight), unless these motions were agreeable to their respective natures? Whatever is agreeable to the nature of a thing preserves it. So what is contrary to its nature destroys it. Dense bodies, such as stones, resist an easy separation of parts; whereas the particles of liquid or flowing things, such as air and water, are easily separated and soon reunited.

2771 Fire avoids and utterly refuses any such division. I am not now treating of the voluntary motion of a conscious soul, but of the natural intention and instinct. We swallow our meat without thinking of it, and we draw our breath in sleep without perception. The love of life in animals is not derived from an intellectual will, but from natural principles

2781 implanted in them. For the will, induced by powerful reasons,

tempraunce of the heuene / as a defendowr myhty to sufren harm / and thus certes maystow wel sen / how gret is the diligence of nature / For alle thinges renouelen and pupplisen hem with seed. I. multiplied / nether nis no man þat ne wot wel þat they ne ben ryht as a foundement and edyfyce for to duren / nat only for a tyme / but ryht as for to duren perdurably by generacyoun // and the thinges ek þat men wenenne hauen none sowles / ne desire they nat ech of hem by sem[b]lable resoun to kepyn þat that is hirs / þat is to seyn þat is acordynge to hyr nature in conservacioun of hyr beyng and enduryng // For wher for elles berith lythnesse the flaumbes vp / and the weyhte presseth the erthe a-doun // but For as moche as thilke places and thilke moeuynge ben couenable to euerich of hem // and forsothe eury thing kepith thilke þat is acordynge and propre to hym // ryht as thinges þat ben contraryes and enemys corompen hem // and yit the harde thinges as stoones clyuen and holden hyr partyes to gydere ryht faste and harde / and deffenden hem in withstondenge þat they ne departe nat lyhtly a twyne // and the thinges þat ben softe and fletynge as is water and Eyr they departyn lyhtly // and yeuen place to hem þat brekyn or deuyden hem // but natheles they retornen sone ayein in to the same thinges fro whennes they ben arraced // but fyr [fleeth] and refuseth alle deuysyoun / ne I. ne trete nat heere now of weleful moeuynge of the sowle þat is knowynge // but of the naturel entencioun of thinges // As thus ryht as we swolwe the mete þat we resseyuen and ne thinke nat on it / and as we drawen owre breth in slepyng þat we wite it nat whil we slepyt // For certes in the beestys the loue of hyr lyuynge ne of hyr beeinges ne comth nat of the wilnynges of the sowle // but of the bygynnyngis of nature // For certes thorw constreynynge causes / wil desireth and embraceth ful

2763 *pupplisen*—H. *publis-*  
shen)

2766 *edyfice*—MS. *edyfite*

2755 *a tyme*—H. *oon* tyme  
2759 *that*—H. omits  
*hirs*—H. *his*

2774 [fleeth]—from H.  
2776 *welaful*—H. *wilfulle*  
2779 *slepyt*—H. *slepen*

ofte tyme / the deth þat nature dredith // that is to seyn  
as thus that a man may ben constreynyd so by som  
cause that his wil desireth and taketh the deth which  
þat nature hateth and dredeth ful sore // And som tyme  
we seeth the contrarye / as thus that the wil of a wight /  
destorbeth and constreyneth þat þat nature desireth / and  
requereth al-vey // that is to sein the werk of generacioun /  
by the whiche generacioun only / dwelleth and is sus-  
tenyd the longe durablete of mortal thinges // And thus  
this charite and this Loue þat every thing hath to hym  
self ne comth nat of the moeyunge of the sowle / but of  
the entencioun of nature // For the puruyance of god  
hat yeuen to thinges þat ben creat of hym / this þat is  
a ful gret cause / to lyuen and to duren / for which they  
desiren naturelly hyr lyf as longe as euer they mowen //  
For w[h]ych thou maist nat drede by no manere / that  
alle the thinges / that ben anywhere / that they ne re-  
queren naturelly / the ferme stablenesse of perdurable  
dwellynge / and ek the eschuyng of destruccyoun // B //  
now confesse I. wel quod I. that I. see wel now certeynly /  
with owte dowtes / the thinges that whylom semeden  
vncerteyn to me / P. // but quod she thilke thyng þat  
desireth to be and to dwellyn perdurablely / he desireth  
to ben oon // For yif þat that oon weere destroyed // certes  
beinge ne shulde ther non dwellyn to no wiht // that  
is soth quod I. // Thanne quod she desirin alle thinges  
oon // .I. assente quod .I. // and I haue shewyd quod she  
that thilke same oon is thilke that is good // B // ye for-  
sothe quod I. // Alle thinges thanne quod she requyren  
good // And thilke good thanne [þow] maist descryuen  
ryht thus // Good is thilke thing þat every wyht de-  
sireth // Ther ne may be thowht quod .I. no moore  
verray thing / for either alle thinges ben referred and  
browht to nowht / and floteryn with owte gouvernour

sometimes chooses and embraces death, although nature dreads and abhors it. And, on the contrary, we see that concupiscence (by which alone the human race is perpetuated) is often restrained by the will. Self-love possessed by every creature is not the

2791

product of volition, but proceeds from a natural impression or intuition of nature.

Providence has implanted in all created things an instinct, for the purpose of self-preservation, by which they desire to prolong existence to its utmost limits. Doubt not, therefore, that everything which

2799

exists desires existence and avoids dissolution.

B. You have made those things perfectly plain and intelligible, which before were obscure and doubtful.

P. That which desires to subsist desires also to retain its unity for if this be taken away it cannot continue to exist.

2807

B. That is very true!

P. All things then desire one thing—unity.

B. They do.

P. Unity then is the same as good.

B. Yes.

P. Thus all things desire good—and it is one

2813

and the same good that all creatures desire.

B. Nothing is more true. For either all things must be reduced to nothing (or have no relation

2788 seeth—H. seen)

2789 wil—H. wille

2792 And—H. as

2796 hat—H. haue

2800 the—H. þo

2806 perdurablely—H. per-

durably

2807 destroyed—H. destrued

2811 thilke (1)—H. ilke



to anything else), and, destitute of a head, float about without control or order; or if there be anything to which all things tend, that must be the supreme good. P. I rejoice greatly, my dear pupil, that you so clearly apprehend this truth, of which but just now you were ignorant.

2825

B. What was that?

P. The *End of all things*. And this is what every one desires; but we have shown that good is the thing desired by all, therefore Good is the *End of all things*.

2832

despoiled of oon / as of hir propre heued / or elles yif ther be any thinge / to which þat alle thinges tenden and hyen / that thing moste ben the souereyn good of alle goodes / P /. thanne seyde she thus // O my norry quod she I haue gret gladnesse of the // For thow hast fichched in thin herte the myddel sothtfastnesse // that is to seyn the prykke // but this thing hath ben descouered to the / in that thow seydyest þat thow wystem nat a lytel her by-forn // what was that quod I. // That thow ne wystem nat quod she whych was the ende of thinges // and Certes that is the thing þat euery wiht desireth // and for as mochel as we han gaderid / and comprehendyd that good is thilke thing that is desired of alle / thanne moten we nedes confessun / that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

## QUISQUIS PROFUNDA MENTE.

[The 11. Metrum.] He who seeks truth with deep research and is unwilling to go wrong, should collect his slumbering thoughts, and turn the inner light upon the soul itself.

The knowledge that he seeks without he will find treasured up in the recesses of the mind.

2841

The light of Truth will disperse Error's dark clouds, and shine forth brighter than the sun.

[Chaucer's gloss.]

Who so that sekith soth by a deep thought And coueyteth nat to ben deseyuyd by no mys-weyes // lat hym rollen and trenden with Inne hym self / the Lyht of his inward syhte // And lat hym gadere ayein enclynge in to a compas the longe moeuynges of hys thowhtes / And lat hym techen his corage that he hath enclosed and hyd / in his tresors / al þat he compaseth or sekith fro with owte // And thanne thilke thing that the blake cloude of errour whilom hadde y-couered / shal lyhten more clerly thanne phebus hym self ne shyneth // Glosa // who so wole seken the dep[e] grounde / of soth in his thowht / and wol nat be deceyuyd by false proposiciouns / that goon amys fro the trouthe // lat hym wel examine / and rolle with inne hym self the nature and the propretes of the thing // and lat hym yit eft sones examine and rollen his thowhtes by good deliberacioun

2818 heued or elles—H. hede  
or els  
2820 hyen—H. hyen to  
moste—H. must

2838 his—H. þis  
that—H. and þat  
2841 blake—H. blak  
hadde y-couered—H. had

couered  
2842 lyhten—H. light  
2843 dep[e]—C. dep, H. depe  
2847 thing—H. þynges

or that he deme // and lat hym techen his sowle that it 2849

hat by naturel pryncyplis kyndeliche y-hyd *with* in

it self alle the trowthe the whiche he ymagynith to ben [Chaucer's gloss]

in thinges *with* owte // And thanne alle the dyrknesse of

his mysknowynge shal seen more eydently to [be]

syhte of his vndyrstondynge thanne the sonne ne semyth 2854

to [be] syhte *with* owte forth / For certes the body

bryngynge the weyhte of foryetynge / ne hath nat chasyd

owt of yowre thowhte al the clernesse of yowre knowyng //

For certeynly the seed of sooth haldith *and* clyueth

*with* in yowre corage / *and* it is a-waked *and* excited by

the wynde *and* by the blastes of doctryne // For where

for elles demen ye of yowre owne wyl the ryhtes whan 2861

ye ben axed // but yif so were *pat* the norryssynges of

resoun ne lyuede .I.-plowngyd in the depthe of yowre

herte // this [is] to seyn how sholden men demen *pe*

sooth of any thing *pat* weere axed / yif ther neere a

Roote of sothfastnesse *pat* weere yplowngyd *and* hyd in 2866

the nature[1] pryncyplis / the whiche sothfastnesse

lyued *with* in the depnesse of the thowght // *and* yif

so be *pat* the Muse *and* the doctryne of plato syngyth

sooth // al *pat* euery whyht lerneth / he ne doth no

thing elles thanne but recordeth as men recordyn thinges

*pat* ben foryetyn. 2872

For when the body enclosed the soul and cast oblivion o'er its powers it did wholly exterminate the heaven-born light. The germs of truth were latent within, and were fanned into action by the gentle breath of learning.

Were not truth implanted in the heart, how could man distinguish right from wrong?

So, if what Plato taught is true, 'to learn is no other than to remember what had been before forgotten.'

## TUM EGO PLATONI INQUAM.

**T**Hanne seide I thus // I acorde me gretly to plato / for  
thow remenbrist *and* recordist me thise thinges yit]

\* *pe* seconde tyme. *pat* is to seyn. first whan I lost[e] my

memorie by *pe* contagiōus coniunccioun of *pe* body wip

*pe* soule. *and* eftsones afterward whan I lost[e] it con-

founded by *pe* charge *and* by *pe* burden of my sorwe.

¶ And pan sayde she þus. ¶ If pou look[e] *quod* she

firste *pe* pinges *pat* pou hast gaunted it ne shal nat

[The .12. prose.]

B. I am quite of Plato's opinion, for you have now a second time recalled these things

\*[*Addit. MS.* 10.340, fol. 23.]

to my remembrance which had been forgotten.

first by the contagious union of soul and body,

and afterwards by the pressure of my afflictions.

P. If you will reflect upon the con-

2863 *depthe*—H. depe  
2864 [is]—from H.  
sholden—H. shulde

2867 *nature[1]*—H. *naturelle*  
2875, 2877 *lost[e]*—loste  
2878 *burden*—burdene

2879 *look[e]*—looke  
2880 *firste*—fyrst

cessions you have already made, you will soon call to mind that truth, of which you lately confessed your ignorance.

B. What is that?

P. It was, by what power the world is governed.

B. With regard to that, I own I confessed my ignorance, but though I now remotely see what you infer, yet I wish for further explanation from you.

P. You acknowledged a little while ago that this world was governed by God?

B. I still cling to this opinion, and will give you my reasons for this belief. The discordant elements of this world

2895

would never have assumed their present form unless there had been a wise Intelligence to unite them; and even after such a union, the joining of such opposites would have disunited and ruined the fabric made up of them, had not the same conjoining hand kept them together. The order that reigns throughout nature could not proceed so regularly and uniformly if there were not a Being, unchangeable and steadfast, to order and dispose so great a diversity of changes. This Being, the creator and ruler of all things, I call God. P. As thy sentiments on these

ben ryzt feer þat þou ne shalt remembren pilke þing þat þou seidest þat þou nistest nat. what þing quod I. ¶ by whiche gouernment quod she þat þis worlde is gouerned. Me remembriþ it wel quod I. and I confesse wel þat I ne wist[e] it nat ¶ But al be it so þat I se now from afer what þou purposest ¶ Al gates I desire zit to herkene it of þe more pleynelly. ¶ þou ne wendest nat quod she a litel here byforne þat men sholden doute þat þis worlde is gouerned by god. ¶ Certys quod I ne zitte doute I it nauzt. ne I nil neuer wene þat it were to doute. as who seip. but I wot wel þat god gouerneþ þis worlde. ¶ And I shal shortly answer þe by what resouns I am brouzt to þis. ¶ þis worlde quod I of so many dyuerse and contrarious parties ne myzten neuer han ben assembled in o forme. but yif þere ne were oon þat conioigned so many[e] diuerse] pinges. ¶ And þe same diuersite of hire natures þat so discordeden þat oon fro þat oþer most[e] departen and vnoignen þe pinges þat ben conioigned. yif þere ne were oon þat contened[e] þat he haþ conioigned and ybounde. ne þe certein ordre of nature ne sholde. nat brynge furþe so ordinee moeuynge. by places. by tymes. by doynges. by spaces. by qualites. yif þere ne were oon þat were ay stedfast dwellynge. þat ordeyned[e] and disposed[e] pise diuersites of moeuynge. ¶ and pilke þinge what so euer it be. by whiche þat alle pinges ben maked and ylad. I clepe hym god þat is a worde þat is vsed to alle folke. þan seide she. syn þou felest þus pise pinges quod she. I trowe þat I haue lytel more to done. þat þou myzty of

2883 *whiche*—which  
gouernment—gouernement  
worlde—wordyl  
2885 *wist[e]*—wiste  
2887 *pleynely*—pleynly  
2888 *here byforne*—her by-  
forne  
2889 *worlde is*—world nis  
2890 *zitte doute*—yit ne  
dowte  
nil—nel  
2892 *wot*—MS. wote, C. wot

2892, 2894 *worlde*—world  
2893 *answere*—answeren  
2894 *many*—manye  
2895 *myzten*—myhte  
2896 *þere*—ther  
2897 *many[e]*—manye  
2897 [*diuerse*]—from C.  
hire—hir  
2898 *most[e]*—moste  
2900 *þere*—ther  
2900 *contened[e]*—contenede  
hap—MS. haþe

2902 *furþe*—forth  
ordinee moeuynge—ordene  
moeuynge  
2904 *þere*—ther  
stedfast—stidefast  
2905 *ordeyned[e]*—ordeynede  
disposed[e]—disponede  
2907 *whiche*—which  
ben—be  
ylad—MS. yladde, C. I-ladd  
2908 *worde*—word  
folke—foolk

wilfulnesse hool *and* sounde ne se eftsones þi contre. ¶ But lat vs loken þe þinges þat we han purposed herbyform. ¶ Hauē I nat noumbred *and* seid *quod* she þat suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse. *and* we han accorded þat god is *and* pilke same blisfulnesse. ¶ Iis forsoþe *quod* I. *and* þat to gouerne þis worlde *quod* she. ne shal he neuer han nede of none helpe fro wiþoute. for ellys yif he had[de] nede of any helpe. he ne sholde not haue [no] ful suffisaunce. ȝis þus it mot nedes be *quod* I. ¶ þan ordeyneþ he by hym self al oon alle þinges *quod* she. þat may nat ben denied *quod* I. ¶ And I haue shewed þat god is þe same good. ¶ It remembreþ me wel *quod* I. ¶ þan ordeineþ he alle þinges by pilke goode *quod* she. Syn he whiche we han accorded to ben good gouerneþ alle þingus by hym self. *and* he is a keye *and* a stiere by whiche þat þe edifice of þis worlde is ykept stable *and* wiþ oute corumpyng. ¶ I accorde me gretly *quod* I. *and* I aperceiuēde a litel here byform þat þou woldest seyne þus. Al be it so þat it were by a pinne suspecion. I trowe it wel *quod* she. ¶ For as I trowe þou ledest nowē more ententifly þine eyen to loken þe verray goodes ¶ but napeles þe þinges þat I shal telle þe ȝit ne sheweþ nat lasse to loken. what is þat *quod* I. ¶ So as men trowen *quod* she *and* þat ryȝtfully þat god gouerneþ alle þinges by þe keye of his goodness. ¶ And alle þise same þinges as I [haue] tauȝt þe. hasten hem by naturel entencion to comen to goode þer may no man doute. þat þei ne ben gouerned uoluntariely. *and* þat þei ne conuerten [hem] nat of her owen wille to þe wille of hire ordenour. as þei þat ben accordyng *and* enclinyng to her gouernour

points are so just I have but little more to do—for thou mayest be happy and secure, and revisit thy own country. But let us reflect a little more upon these matters. Did we not agree that *Sufficiency* is of the nature of true happiness? And have we not seen that God is that true felicity, and that He needs no external aid nor instruments? For if he should, he would not be self-sufficient. And he directs all things by himself alone? *B.* It cannot be gainsaid. *P.* I have shown that God is the chief good; God must, therefore, direct and order all things by good, since he governs them by himself, whom we have proved to be the supreme good, 2928

and he is that helm and rudder, by which this machine of the world is steadily and securely conducted. *B.* I entirely agree to this, and partly anticipated your remarks. *P.* I believe it; for your eyes are now more intent upon these great truths relating to true felicity; but what I am going to say is not less open to your view. *B.* What is that? *P.* As we believe that God governs all things by his goodness, and that all things have a natural tendency towards the good, can it be doubted but that they all voluntarily sub-

2911 *wilfulnesse*—welefulnesse  
2912 *han*—ha  
2913 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
2916 *worldde*—world  
2917 *none helpe*—non help  
2918 *had[de]*—hadde  
2919 *help*—help  
2919 [no]—from C.  
2920 *at oon*—allone

2921 *ben denied*—be denoyed  
2924, 2926 *whiche*—which  
2925 *ben*—be  
2926 *worldde*—world  
2928 *gretly*—gretely  
2928 *here*—her  
2929 *seyne*—seye  
2931 *nowe*—now  
2932 *napeles*—nat[h]les  
2935 *ryȝtfully*—MS. on ryȝt-

fully  
2936 [haue]—from C.  
2938 *goode*—good  
2939 [hem]—from C.  
2940 *nat*—omitted  
2941 *her*—hir  
2941 *owen*—owne  
2941 *wille* (both)—wil  
2941 *hire*—hyr  
2941 *her*—hyr

[\* Fol. 23 b.]  
mit to the will  
and control  
of their ruler?  
B. It cannot be  
otherwise. There  
would be no safety  
for those who  
obey, if the discord  
of a portion were  
allowed. P. Is  
there anything  
that follows the

dictates of nature  
that seeks to  
counteract the will  
of God? B. No.  
P. If there should  
be any such, it  
could not pre-  
vail against  
him, who is su-  
premely happy  
and consequently  
omnipotent.  
Then there is  
nothing that  
either will or can  
withstand this  
supreme good?  
B. Nothing,  
certainly.

P. It is then the  
supreme good that

governs and  
orders all things  
powerfully and  
benignly.  
B. I am delighted  
with your conclu-  
sions, but much  
more with your  
language; so that  
fools may be  
ashamed of their  
objections to the  
divine govern-  
ment.

[Chaucer's gloss.]  
P. You have read  
the Poets' fables.

how the Giants  
stormed heaven—  
how they were re-  
pulsed and  
punished accord-  
ing to their  
deserts; but may  
we not compare  
our reasons to-  
gether, for by so  
doing some clear  
spark of truth may  
shine forth?

2943 *realme*—Reaume

*seme*—semen

2945 *pere*—ther

2947 *gone aseyne*—goon aseyin

2948 *enforced[e]*—enforcede

*myzt[e]*—myhte

*auayle*—auayien

2949 *aseyne*—a-yeinis

2951 *outerly*—owtwey

*myzt[e]*—myhte

*auaylen*—MS. auaieyne,

C. auaylen

*hym*—hem

*pere*—ther

2962 *wol*—wole

*wipstonde*—with-standyn

*his souereyne*—his soue-

2965 *softly*—softely [reyn

2967 *sommes*—somme

[the]—from C.

2969 *last[e]*—laste

2990 *greet[e]*—grete

2960, 2963 *auzten*—owhten

2961 *seyne*—seyn

2966 *of hem*—of it

*herd*—MS. herde, C. herd

2967 *disposed[e]*—desposede

2968 *seyne distroied[e]*—seyn

destroyede

2971 *swiche*—swych

*some*—som

2972 *sope*—soth

*list*—liste

and her kyng. ¶ It mot nedys be so quod. I. \* ¶ For  
þe realme ne sholde not seme blisful ȝif þere were a ȝok  
of mysdrawynges in diuerse parties ne þe sauynge of  
obedient þinges ne sholde nat be. þan is þere no þing  
quod she þat kepip hys nature: þat enforceþ hym to  
gone aseyne god. ¶ No quod. I. ¶ And if þat any þing  
enforced[e] hym to wipstonde god. myzt[e] it auayle at  
þe laste aseyne hym þat we han graunted to ben al  
myzty by þe ryzt of blisfulnesse. ¶ Certis quod I al  
outerly it ne myzt[e] nat auaylen hym. þan is þere no  
þing quod she þat eyþer wol or may wipstonde to þis  
souereyne good. ¶ I trowe nat quod. I. ¶ þan is  
pilke þe souereyne good quod she þat alle þingus  
gouerneþ strongly and ordeyneþ hem softly. þan seide I  
þus. I delite me quod I nat oonly in þe endes or in þe  
sommen of [the] resouns þat þou hast concludid and  
proued. ¶ But pilke wordes þat þou vset deliten me  
moche more. ¶ So at þe last[e] fooles þat somtyme  
renden greet[e] þinges auzten ben asshamed of hem  
self. ¶ þat is to seyne þat we fooles þat reprehenden  
wickedly þe þingus þat touchen goddes gouernaunce we  
auzten ben asshamed of oure self. As I þat seide god  
refuseþ oonly þe werkes of men. and ne entremetiþ nat  
of hem. p. þou hast wel herd quod she þe fables of þe  
poetes. how þe geauntes assailden þe heuene wip þe  
goddess. but for soþe þe debonaire force of god disposed[e]  
hem so as it was worpi. þat is to seyne distroied[e] þe  
geauntes. as it was worpi. ¶ But wilt þou þat we  
ioygnen togedre pilke same resouns. for perauenture of  
swiche coniunccioun may sterten vp some faire sperkele  
of soþe ¶ Do quod I as þe list. wenest þou quod she

þat god ne is almyȝty. no man is in doute of it. Certys quod I no wyȝt ne defendiþ it if he be in hys mynde. but he quod she þat is al myȝty þere nis no þing þat he ne may do. þat is soþe quod I. May god done yuel quod she. nay for soþe quod. I. ¶ þan is yuel no þing quod she. ¶ Syn þat he ne may not done yuel þat may done alle þinges. scornest þou me quod. I. or ellys pleyest þou or decciuest þou me. þat hast so wouen me wiþ þi resouns. þe house of didalus so entrelaced. þat it is vnable to ben vnlaced. þou þat oþer while entrest þere þou issest and oþer while issest þere þou entrest. ne fooldest þou nat to gidre by replicacioun of wordes a maner wondirful cercle or envirounyng of symplicite deuyne. ¶ For certys a litel her byforne whan þou bygunne atte blisfulnesse þou seidest þat it is souereyne good. and seidest þat it is set in souereyne god. and þat god is þe ful[le] blisfulnesse. for whiche þou ȝaf[e] me as a couenable ȝifte. þat is to seyne þat no wyȝt nis blisful. but yif he be good al so þer wiþ and seidest eke þat þe forme of goode is þe substaunce of god. and of blisfulnesse. and seidest þat pilke same oone is pilke same goode þat is requered and desired of al þe kynde of þinges. and þou proeuedest in disputyng þat god gouerneþ alle [the] þinges of þe worlde by þe gouernementys of bountee. and seydest þat alle þinges wolen ybeyen to hym. and seidest þat þe nature of yuel nis no þing. and þise þinges ne shewedest þou nat wiþ no resouns ytake fro wiþoute but by proues in cercles and homelyche knowen. ¶ þe whiche proeues drawn to hem self hir feiþ and hir accorde eueriche [of] hem of oþer. þan seide she þus. I ne scorne þe nat ne pleye ne desseyue

B. As you please.  
P. Is God omnipotent?

B. No one doubts it.

P. If he is almighty, there are, then, no limits to his power?

B. He can doubtless do all things.

P. May God do evil? B. No.

P. Is evil nothing, since God, who is almighty, cannot do it?

B. Dost thou mock me or play with me, leading me

with thy arguments into an inextricable labyrinth, and enclosing me in a wonderful circle of Divine Simplicity?

For thou didst first begin with happiness, and didst say that it

was the sovereign good, and that it resided in God;

then, that God was that Good and the

2989 perfection of happiness; and, hence, thou didst infer that nobody could be happy unless he became likewise a God.

Again, thou saidst that the very form of good was the substance whereof God and happiness

were composed, and that it was the object and desire of all things in nature. Thou

didst prove that God rules the world by his goodness, and that all things willingly obeyed him; and

that evil has no existence. These truths you established by forcible and natural arguments, and by no strained and far-fetched reasons.

2990

2991

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2998

2999

3000

3001

3002

2973 is (1)—be  
man—omitted  
is (2)—nis  
2974 defendiþ—downteth  
2975 þere—ther  
2976 do—C. omits  
soþe—soth  
done—don  
2978, 2979 done—don  
2980 wouen—MS. wonnen, C.

wouen  
2981 house—hows  
2983 þere (both)—ther  
2987 atte—at  
2988 set—MS. sette, C. set  
1989 ful[le]—fulle  
whiche—which  
ȝaf[e]—ȝaue  
2990 ȝifte—ȝift  
seyne—seyn

2992, 2994 goode—good  
2993 oone—oon  
2994 al—alle  
2996 [the]—from C.  
2998 ybeyen—obeyen  
2999 no (2)—none  
3000 ytake—I-taken  
3001 homelyche—hoomlich  
3002 eueriche—euerich  
[af]—from C.

P. I have not deduced you, for by the Divine aid we have accomplished our chief task. I have proved to you that it is an essential property of the Divine nature not to go out of itself, nor to receive into itself anything extraneous. Parmenides says of the Deity that *God is like a well-rounded sphere.*

3012

[\* fol. 24.]  
He causes the moving globe to revolve, but is himself immovable. If I have chosen my arguments from the subjects within range of our discussion, do not let that surprise you, for, as Plato has taught us, there ought to be an alliance between the words and the subject of discourse.

pe. but I haue shewed to þe þinge þat is gretteſt ouer alle þinges by þe gifte of god þat we ſome tyme prayden ¶ For þis is þe forme of [the] deuyne ſubſtaunce. þat is ſwiche þat it ne ſlydeþ nat in to outerest foreine þinges. ne ne rec[e]yueþ no ſtrange þinges in hym. but ryȝt as parmaynwſeide in grek of þilke deuyne ſubſtaunce. he ſeide þuſ þat þilke deuyne ſubſtaunce torneþ þe worlde and þilke cercle moeueable of þinges while þilke dyuyne ſubſtaunce kepip it ſelf wiþ outen moeuyng. þat \* is to ſeyne þat it ne moeuip neuere mo. and zitte it moeueþ alle oþer þinges. but na-þeles yif I [haue] ſtered reſounz þat ne ben nat taken fro wiþ oute þe compas of þe þinge of whiche we treten. but reſounz þat ben byſtowed wiþ inne þat compas þere niſ nat whi þat þou ſholde[ſt] merueylen. ſen þou haſt lerned by þe ſentence of plato þat nedes þe wordes moten ben coſynes to þo þinges of whiche þei ſpeken. 3020

## FELIX QUI POTERIT. ET CETERA.

[The .12. Metur.]  
Happy is he that hath seen the lucid spring of truth! Happy the man that hath freed himself from terrestrial chains! The Thracian poet, consumed with grief for the loss of his wife, sought relief from music. His mournful songs drew the woods along; the rolling rivers ceased to flow; the savage beasts became heedless of their prey; the timid hare was not aghast at the hound. But the

Blisful is þat man þat may ſeen þe clere welle of good. blisful is he þat may vnbynde hym fro þe bonde of heuy erþe. ¶ þe poete of trace [orpheus] þat ſomtyme hadde ryȝt greet ſorowe for þe deeþ of hys wiȝf. aftir þat he hadde maked by hys wepely ſonges þe wodes meueable to rennen. and hadde ymaked þe ryueres to ſtonden ſtille. and maked þe hertys and hyndes to ioignen dredles hir ſides to cruel lyouns to herkene his ſonge. and had[de] maked þat þe hare was nat agast of þe hounde whiche þat was plesed by hys ſonge. ſo þat whane þe moſt[e] ardaunt loue of hys wiȝf brende þe

3004 þe þinge—the the thing  
3005 gifte—yift  
some tyme prayden —  
whilom preyden  
3006 [the]—from C.  
3007 swiche—swich  
3009 parmaynwſe — a par-  
manides  
3011 worlde—world  
3012 while—whil  
wiþ outen—with owte

3013 ſeyne—seyn  
3014 zitte—yit  
oþer—oother  
3015 [haue]—from C.  
3016 whiche—which  
3017 wiþ inne—with in  
3020 coſynes—MS. conceyued,  
C. coſynes  
þo—þe  
whiche—which  
3022 vnbynde—vnbyndyn

3023 bonde—bondes  
3023 [orpheus]—from C.  
somyne—whilom  
3024 sorowe—sorwe  
3028 dredles—dredeles  
to herkene—farto herknen  
3029 had[de]—hadde  
3030 þat (2)—omitted  
3031 moſt[e]—moſte

entrailes of his brest. ne þe songes þat hadde ouer  
comen alle þinges ne myzten nat assuage hir lorde  
orpheus. ¶ He pleyned[e] hym of þe godes þat weren  
cruel to hym. he wente hym to þe houses of helle *and*  
þere he tempred[e] hys blaundissyng songes by re-  
sounyng of hys strenges. ¶ And spak *and* song in  
wepyng alle þat euer he hadde resceyued *and* laued  
oute of þe noble welles of hys modir calliope þe god-  
desse. *and* he song wiþ as mychel as he myzt[e] of  
wepyng. *and* wiþ as myche as loue þat doubled[e] his  
sorwe myzt[e] ȝeuen hym *and* teche hym in his seke  
herte. ¶ And he commoeuede þe helle *and* requered[e]  
*and* souȝte by swete preiere þe lordes of soules in helle  
of relesyng. þat is to seyne to ȝelden hym hys wif.  
¶ Cerberus þe porter of helle wiþ his þre heuedes was  
cauȝt *and* al abaist for þe new[e] songe. *and* þe þre god-  
desses furijs *and* vengerisse of felonies þat tourmenten  
*and* agasten þe soules by anoye wexen sorweful *and* sory  
*and* wepen teres for pitee. þan was nat þe heued of  
Ixione ytourmented by þe ouerprowyng whele. ¶ And  
tantalus þat was destroyed by þe woodnesse of longe  
þrust dispiseþ þe flodes to drynke. þe fowel þat hyȝt  
voltor þat etip þe stomak or þe giser of ticius is so ful-  
filled of his songe þat it nil etyn ne tyren no more.  
¶ Atte þe laste þe lorde *and* Iuge of soules was moeued  
to misericordes *and* cried[e] we ben ouer comen quod  
he. yif[e] we to orpheus his wijf to bere hym com-  
paignye he haþ welle I-bouȝt hir by his faire songe *and*

songs that did all  
things tame, could  
not allay their  
master's ardent  
love. He bewailed  
the cruelty of the  
gods above, and  
descended to  
Pluto's realm.  
3036

There he struck  
his tuneful strings  
and sang, ex-  
hausting all the  
harmonious art  
imparted to him  
by his mother  
Calliope.  
In songs dictated  
both by grief and  
love, he implored  
the infernal  
powers to give  
him back his  
Eurydice.  
3044

Cerberus, Hell's  
three-headed  
porter, stood  
amazed;  
the Furies, tor-  
mentors of guilty  
souls, did weep;  
3049

Ixion, tormented  
by the revolving  
wheel, found rest;  
Tantalus, suffer-  
ing from a long  
and raging thirst,  
despised the  
stream;  
and the greedy  
vulture did cease  
to eat and tear the  
growing liver of  
Tityus. At length  
Pluto himself re-  
lent, crying  
out, 'We are  
overcome! Let  
us give him back  
his wife, he hath  
well won her by  
his song.'

3032 *hadde*—hadden  
3033 *assuage*—asswage  
    *lords*—lord  
3034 *pleyned[e]*—pleynede  
    *godes*—heune goodes  
3035 *wente*—MS. wenten, C.  
    wente  
3036 *tempred[e]* *hys*—tem-  
    pred his  
3037 *of hys*—C. omits  
    *spak*—MS. spakke, C. spak  
    *song*—MS. songe, C. soonge  
3038 *alle*—al  
3039 *oute*—out  
    *goddesses*—goddess  
3040 *song*—MS. songe, C.

*soonge*  
    *mychel*—mochel  
3041 *myche*—moche  
    *doubled[e]*—dowblede  
3042 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
    *ȝeuen*—ȝeue  
    *teche*—thechen  
    *in*—*herte*—omitted  
3043 *commoeuede*—MS. com-  
    aunded, C. commoeuede  
3044 *souȝte*—by sowhte  
3045 *ȝelden*—ȝilden  
3046 *his*—hise  
3047 *cauȝt*—MS. cauȝte, C.  
    cawht  
    *new[e] songe*—newe song

3048 *anoye*—*sorweful*—  
    anoy woxen sorful  
3050 *þan*—tho ne  
3051 *whele*—wheel  
3053 *þrust*—thurst  
    *hyȝt*—hihte  
3054 *fulfilled*—fulfyld  
3055 *songe*—song  
3056 *atte*—At  
    *lorde*—lord  
3057 *cried[e]*—cryde  
3058 *ȝif[e]*—ȝue  
3059 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
    *faire*—wel  
    *faire*—C. omits  
    *songe*—song



But we will lay this injunction upon him. Till he escape the infernal bounds, he shall not cast a backward look.' But, who shall give a lover any law? Love is a greater law than may be given to any earthly man. Alas! having left the realms of night, Orpheus cast a look behind and lost his too-much-loved Eurydice. This fable belongs to all you, whose minds would view the Sovereign Good.

3071

For he who fixes his thoughts upon earthly things and low, must lose the noble and heaven-imparted Good.

3076

his ditee. but we wil putten a lawe in þis. *and* couen-  
aunt in þe ȝifte. þat is to seyne. þat til he be out of  
helle yif he loke byhynden hym [þat] hys wijf shal  
comen aȝeine to vs ¶ but what is he þat may ȝeue a  
lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter lawe *and* a strengere to  
hym self þan any lawe þat men may ȝeuen. ¶ Allas  
whan Orpheus *and* his wijf were al most at þe termes of  
þe nyȝt. þat is to seyne at þe last[e] boundes of helle.  
Orpheus loket[e] abakwarde on Erudice his wijf *and*  
lost[e] hir *and* was deed. ¶ þis fable apperteineþ to  
ȝow alle who so euer desireþ or sekij to lede his þouȝte  
in to þe souereyne day. þat is to seyne to clerenes[se]  
of souereyne goode. ¶ For who so þat euere be so ouer  
comen þat he fycche hys eyen in to þe put[te] of helle.  
þat is to seyne who so setteþ his þouȝtes in erþely  
þinges. al þat euer he haþ drawnen of þe noble good  
celestial he lesij it whan he lokeþ þe helles. þat is to  
seyne to lowe þinges of þe erþe.

EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS.

[\* fol. 24 b.]

\* INCIPIT LIBER QUARTUS.

HEC CUM PHILOSOPHIA DIGNITATE VULTUS.

[The 1<sup>st</sup> prose.]

When P. with grace and dignity had poured forth her songs, I, not quite quit of my load of grief, interrupted her as she was continuing her discourse.

3082

All your discourses, O my conductress to the

Whanne philosophie hadde songen softly *and* delita-  
bly þe forseide þinges kepyng þe dignitee of hir  
choere in þe weyȝte of hir wordes. I þan þat ne hadde  
nat al outerly forȝeten þe wepyng *and* mournyng  
þat was set in myne herte for-brek þe entencioun of hir  
þat entended[e] ȝitte to seyne oþer þinges. ¶ Se quod  
I. þou þat art gidereesse of verray lyȝte þe þinges þat þou

3080 *wil putten*—wol putte  
3082 *byhynden*—by-hynde  
[þat]—from O.  
3083 *to—vn—to*  
3084 *gretter*—gret  
3086 *were al most*—woren  
almost  
3087 *lost[e]*—laste  
3089 *loket[e]* *abakwarde*—

lookede abacward  
3089 *lost[e]*—laste  
3070 *þouȝte*—thowht  
3071 *clerenes[se]*—clernesse  
3072 *souereyne goode*—sou-  
reyn god  
3073 *put[te]*—putte  
3074 *setteþ*—sette  
3076 *haþ*—MS. haþe

3078 *softly*—softely  
3080 *choere in*—cheere *and*  
3082 *set*—MS. sette, C. set  
*myne*—Myne  
*for-brek*—MS. for-breke, C.  
Forbrak  
3083 *entended[e]*—entendede  
3084 *lyȝte*—lyht

hast seid [me] hider to ben to me so clere *and* so shew-  
yng by þe deuyne lokyng of hem *and* by þi resouns þat  
þei ne mowe nat ben ouercomen. ¶ And þilke *pingus*  
þat þou toldest me. al be it so þat I hadde som tyme  
fo[r]ȝeten hem for [the] sorwe of þe wronge þat haþ ben  
don to me. ȝit napeles þei ne were nat alouterly vn-  
knownen to me. but þis same is namly a gret cause of  
my sorwe. þat so as þe gouernoure of pinges is goode.  
yif þat yuelys mowen ben by any weyes. or ellys yif  
þat yuelys passen wip outen punysseinge. þe whiche  
pinge oonly how worpi it is to ben wondred vpon. þou  
considerest it weel þi self certeynly. but ȝitte to þis  
ping þere is an oþer ping y-ioigned more to ben ywon-  
dred vpon. ¶ For felonie is emperisse *and* flowrep ful of  
rychesse. and vertues nis nat al oonly wip outen medes.  
but it is cast vndir *and* fortroden vndir þe feet of fe-  
lonous folk. *and* it abieþ þe tourmentes in sted of  
wicked felouns ¶ Of al[le] whiche ping þer nis no wylt  
þat [may] merueyllen ynouȝ ne compleyne þat swiche  
pinges ben don in þe regne of god þat alle pinges woot.  
and alle pinges may *and* ne wool nat but only goode  
pinges. ¶ þan seide she þus. certys *quod* she þat were  
a grete meruayle *and* an enbaissynge wipouten ende.  
*and* wel more horrible þan alle monstres yif it were as  
þou wenest. þat is to sein. þat in þe ryȝt ordeyne house  
of so mochel a fader *and* an ordenour of meyne. þat þe  
vesseles þat ben foule *and* vyle sholde ben honoured  
*and* heried. and þe precious uesteles sholde ben de-  
fouled *and* vyle. but it nis nat so. For yif þe pinges

true light! have  
been very clear and  
unanswerable,  
both by the divine  
testimony which  
they carry along  
with them, and  
by thy irrefrag-  
able arguments.  
Through the op-  
pression of grief  
I had forgotten  
these truths, but  
was not wholly  
ignorant of them.  
The principal  
cause of my  
trouble is this—  
that, whilst the  
absolute Ruler of  
all things is good-  
ness itself, evil  
exists and is al-  
lowed to pass un-  
punished! This,  
to say the least, is  
astonishing.

3097

Moreover, while  
vice flourishes  
virtue is not only  
unrewarded, but  
trampled under  
foot by base and  
profligate men,  
and suffers the  
punishment due  
to impiety. Here  
is cause for  
wonderment,  
since such things  
are possible under  
the government of  
an omniscient and  
omnipotent God,  
who wills nothing  
but what is the  
best.

3107

P. It were in-  
deed, not only  
marvellous, but  
also horribly  
monstrous, if, in  
the well-regulated  
family of so great  
a master, the  
worthless vessels  
should be  
honoured and the  
precious ones be  
despised:—but it  
is not so. For if

3085 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seid  
[me]—from C.

3086 *þi*—the

3087 *mowe*—mowen

3088 *som tyme*—whilom

3089 [the]—from C.

*wronge*—wrong

*haþ*—MS. haþe

3090 *don*—MS. done, C. don

*were*—weeren

3091 *namly*—namely

3092 *goode*—good

3094 *wip outen*—with owte

3095 *pinge*—thing

3097 *pere*—ther

*ben ywondred*—be won-  
dryd

3098 *flowrep*—MS. folwep,  
C. flowrith

3099 *rychesse*—Rychesses

*vertues*—vertu

*wip outen*—with owte

3101 *in sted*—in stide

3102 *wicked*—wikkede

*al[le]*—alle

*ping*—things

3103 [may]—from C.

3104 *don*—MS. done, C. doon

3105 *wool*—wole

*goode*—good

3107 *grete*—gret

*enbaissynge*—enbasshinge

3108 *alle*—al

3109 *ordeyne house*—ordenee  
hows

3111, 3113 *egle*—vyl

3112 *heried*—he heried

*sholde*—sholden

3113 *þe*—tho

the conclusions we have come to, be sound and irrefragable, we must confess that under God's rule the good are always powerful and mighty, and the wicked weak and contemptible; that vice never passes unpunished, nor virtue goes unrewarded; that happiness attends good men, and misfortune falls to the lot of the wicked. These and many other truths of like nature shall be proved to thee, and shall put an end to thy complaints, and strengthen thee with firmness and solidity. Having shown you a picture of true felicity, and wherein it resides, I shall now trace out the way which will lead you to your home. I will give your soul wings to soar aloft, so that all tribulation being removed, you may, under my guiding, by my road, and with my vehicle, return whole and sound into your own country.

[The fyrste metur.]  
I have nimble wings that enable the mind to rise from earth to heaven, to leave the clouds behind, to pass the region of perpetual flame, and to reach the starry mansion, journeying either by Phœbus

pat I haue concluded a litel here byforne ben kept hoole and vnaced. þou shalt wel knowe by þe auctorite of god. of þe whos regne I speke þat certys þe good[e] folk ben alwey myzty. and shrewes ben alwey yuel and feble. ne þe vices ben neuere mo wiþ outhen peyne: ne þe vertues ne ben nat wiþ outhen mede. and þat blisfulnesses comen alwey to goode folke. and infortune cometh alwey to wicked folke. ¶ And þou shalt wel knowe many[e] pinges of þis kynde þat sholle cessen þi pleyntes. and stedfast þe wiþ stedfast saddenese. ¶ And for þou hast seyn þe forme of þe verray blisfulnesse by me þat [haue] somtyme I-shewed it þe. And þou hast knowen in whom blysfulnesse is set. alle pinges I treted þat I trowe ben nessessarie to put[te] furþe ¶ I shal shewe þe. þe weye þat shal brynge þe azeine vnto þi house and I shal ficche feþeres in þi þouzt by whiche it may aryse in heyzte. so þat al tribulacioun don away. þou by my gidying & by my pape and by my sledes shalt mowen retourne hool and sounde in to þi contre. 3132

## SUNT ETENIM PENNE. ET CETERA.

I Haue for soþe swifte feþeres þat surmounten þe heyzt of þe heuene whan þe swifte þouzt haþ cloþed it self. in þo feþeres it dispiseþ þe hat[e]ful erpes. and surmounteth þe heyzenesse of þe greet[e] eyir. and it seiþ þe cloude by-hynde hir bak and passeþ þe heyzt of þe regioun of þe fire þat eschaufiþ by þe swifte moeyng of 3139 þe firmament. til þat she a-reisip hir in til þe houses þat

3114 *here byforne*—her by-forne  
3115 *kept*—MS. kepte, C. kept  
3116 *good[e]*—goode  
3117 *alwey* (2)—*feble*—alwey owt cast and feble  
3118, 3119 *wiþ outhen*—with outhen  
3119 *vertues*—vertuys  
3122 *many[e]*—manye  
3122 *sholle cessen*—shollen cessen  
3123 *stedfast*—*stedfast*—strengthyn the with stidfast

3124 *seyn*—MS. seyne, C. seyn  
3125 [haue]—from C.  
3126 *somtyme*—whilom  
3126 *set*—MS. sette, C. I-set  
3127 *put[te] furþe*—putten forth  
3128 *weye*—wey  
3128 *brynge*—bryngen  
3128 *þi house*—thin hows  
3129 *ficche*—fychoen  
3130 *arysen*—areysen  
3130 *don*—MS. done, C. ydoil  
3131 *pape*—paath  
3131 *shalt mowen*—shal mowe

3132 *sounde*—sownd  
3133 *heyzt of þe heuene*—heyhte of heuene  
3134 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
3136 *heyzenesse*—*eyir*—Roundnesse of the grete ayr  
3137 *seiþ*—seth  
3137 *hir*—his  
3138 *fro*—Fyr  
3138 *eschaufiþ*—MS. eschaufiþe  
3139 *she*—he  
3139 *hir*—hym

beren þe sterres. *and* ioygneþ hir weyes wiþ þe sonne  
phebue. *and* felawshiþeþ þe weye of þe olde colde  
saturnus. *and* she ymaked a knyzt of þe clere sterre.  
þat is to seyne þat þe soule is maked goddys knyzt by  
þe sekynge of treuþe to comen to þe verray knowlege of  
god. *and* pilke soule renne[þ] by þe cercle \*of þe sterres  
in alle þe places þere as þe shynynge nyzt is depeynted.  
þat is to seyne þe nyzt þat is cloudeles. for on nyztes þat  
ben cloudeles it semeþ as þe heuene were peynted wiþ  
dyuerse ymages of sterres. *and* whan þe soule haþ gon  
ynouȝ she shal forleten þe last[e] poynt of þe heuene.  
*and* she shal pressen *and* wenden on þe bak of þe swifte  
firmament. *and* she shal ben maked perfit of þe drede-  
fulle clerenesse of god. ¶ þere haldeþ þe lorde of kynges  
þe ceptre of his myzt *and* attempereþ þe gouernementes  
of þis worlde. *and* þe shynynge iuge of þinges stable in  
hym self gouerneþ þe swifte carte. þat is to seyne þe  
circular moeuynge of [the] sonne. *and* yif þi weye ledeþ  
þe aȝeyne so þat þou be brouȝt pider. þan wilt þou seye  
now þat þat is þe contre þat þou requeredest of whiche þou  
ne haddest no mynde. but now it remembreþ me wel  
here was I born. here wil I fastne my degree. here wil  
I dwelle. but yif þe lyke þan to loken on þe derkenesse  
of þe erþe þat þou hast for-leten. þan shalt þou seen þat  
þise felonous tyrauntes þat þe wrecched[e] poeple dredeþ  
now shule ben exiled from pilke faire contre.

radiant path, or  
accompanying  
cold and aged  
Saturn, or riding,  
3142

as a soldier, with  
Mars. [Chaucer's  
Gloss.] Through  
every sphere she  
(the mind) runs

[\* fol. 25.]  
where night is  
most cloudless and  
where the sky is  
decked with stars,  
until she reaches  
the heaven's  
utmost sphere—  
then pressing on  
she shall be pre-  
pared to see the  
true Source of  
Light, where the  
great King of  
kings bears his  
mighty sceptre,  
and holds the  
reins of the  
universe. Here  
the great Judge,  
standing in  
shining robes,  
firmly guides his  
winged chariot,  
and rules the  
tumultuous affairs  
of the world.

If you at length  
shall arrive at  
this abode, you  
will say this is  
my country—here  
I was born—and  
here will I abide.

3161

And should you  
deign to look on  
the gloomy earth,  
you'll see those  
tyrants, the fear  
of wretched folk,  
banished from  
those fair realms.

3140 *hir*—his  
3141 *weye*—wey  
þe—*saturnus*—MS. sa-  
turnus þe olde colde  
3142 *saturnus*—*saturnis*  
she—he  
3143 *soule*—thought  
3144 *treuþe*—trouthe  
knowlege—knowledge  
3145 *soule*—thought  
3146 *depeynted*—painted  
3149-50 *and whan*—*sheenal*

—*and* whanne he hath  
I-doone there I-nowh he  
shal  
3149 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
3150 *þe last[e]*—*heuene*—  
the laste heuene  
3151-2 *she*—he  
3152-3 *of þe*—*of god*—of the  
worshipful lyht of god  
3153 *þere haldeþ*—ther halt  
3155 *þis worlde*—the world  
3156 *carte*—cart or wayn

3157 [*the*]—from C.  
3159 *whiche*—which  
3161 *þere* (1, 2, 3)—her  
*borne*—MS. borne, C. born  
*woil* (1)—wole  
*woil* (2)—wole  
3162 *lyke*—liketh  
*derkenesse*—dyrknesses  
3164 *wrecched[e]*—wrecch-  
ede  
3165 *shule*—shollen  
*from*—fro

## TUNC EGO PAPE INQUAM. ET CETERA.

[The 2<sup>d</sup> prose.]

B. Ah! thou promistest me great things indeed!—but without delay, satisfy the expectations you have raised.

P. You must first be convinced that the good are always strong and powerful and the wicked destitute of strength. These assertions do

3173 mutually demonstrate each other. For since good and evil are contrary, if good be powerful evil must be impotent. And if the frailty of evil is known, the strength and stability of good must also be known to you. But to convince you I shall proceed to prove it from both these principles, establishing these truths, by arguments drawn first from one of these topics and then from the other. Two things are necessary to every action—the Will and the Power; if either be wanting, nothing can be effected. A man can do nothing without the concurrence of his will, and if power faileth the will is of no effect. Hence, if you see a person desirous

3191 of getting what he cannot procure, you are sure he lacks power to obtain it. And if you see another do what he had a mind to do, can you doubt

þ Anne seide I þus. [owh] I wondre me þat þou byhetest me so grete þinges. ne I ne doute nat þat þou ne mayst wel performe þat þou by-hetest. but I preie þe oonly þis. þat þou ne tarie nat to telle me þilke þinges þat þou hast meoued. first quod she þou most nedes knowen. þat good[e] folk ben al wey strong[e] and myzty. and þe shrewes ben feble and desert and naked of alle strengþes. and of þise þinges certys eueryche of hem is declared and shewed by oper. ¶ For so as good and yuel ben two contraries. yif so be þat goode be stedfast. þan shewep þe fieblesse of yuel al openly. and yif þou knowe clerely þe freelnesse of yuel. þe stedfastnesse of goode is knowen. but for as moche as þe fey of my sentence shal be þe more ferme and haboundaunt. I wil goon by þat oon wey and by þat oper and I wil conferme þe þinges þat ben purposed now on þis side and now on þat syde. ¶ Two þinges þer ben in whiche þe effect of alle þe dedes of man kynde standiþ. þat is to seyn. wil and power. and yif þat oon of þise two faylep þere nis no þing þat may be don. for yif þat wil lakkep þere nys no wyzt þat vndirtakeþ to done þat he wol not don. and yif power faylep þe wille nis but in ydel and stant for nauzt. and þer of comeþ it þat yif þou se a wyzt þat wolde geten þat he may nat geten. þou mayst nat douten þat power ne faylep hym to hauen þat he wolde. ¶ þis is open and clere quod I. ne it may nat ben denyed in no manere. and yif þou se a wyzt quod she. þat haþ don þat he wolde don þou nilt nat douten þat he ne haþ had power to done it. no quod. I. and in þat. þat euery wyzt may. in þat þat men may holden

3166 [owh]—from C.

3171 good[e]—goode

strong[e]—stronge

3172 desert—dishert

3173 eueryche—euerych

3175 goode—good

3176 stedfast—stidefast

3177 freelnesse—frelenesse

stedfastnesse — stidefast-

nesse

3178 goode—good

3180 oon—oo

wil (2)—wole

3185-6 þere—ther

3185 don—MS. done, C. don

3186 done—don

3187 wille—wil

3188 comeþ—comht

3189 mayst—MS. mayste,

C. mayst

3191 clere—cler

3192 denyed—denoyed

3193-4 haþ—MS. haþe

3193 don (both)—MS. done,

C. doon

3194 had—MS. hadde, C. had

done—doon

hym myzty. as who seip in as moche as a man is myzty  
to done a ping. in so moche men halden hym myzty.  
and in pat pat he ne may. in pat men demen hym to  
ben feble. I confesse it wel quod I. Remembriþ þe quod  
she pat I. haue gadred *and* shewed by forseide resouns  
pat al þe entencioun of þe wil of mankynde whiche pat  
is lad by diuerse studies hastiþ to comen to blisfulnesse.  
¶ It remembreþ me wel quod I pat it hath ben shewed.  
*and* recordeþ þe nat þan quod she. pat blisfulnesse is  
pilke same goode pat men requeren. so pat whan pat  
blisfulnesse is requered \*of alle. pat goode [also] is re-  
quered *and* desired of al. It recordeþ me wel quod I.  
for haue it gretly alwey ficche[d] in my memorie. alle  
folk þan quod she goode *and* eke badde enforcen hem  
wiþ oute difference of entencioun to comen to goode.  
pat is a uerray consequence quod I. and certeyne is quod  
she pat by þe getyng of goode ben men ymaked goode.  
þis is certeyne quod. I. ¶ þan geten goode men pat þei  
desiren. so semeþ it quod I. but wicked[e] folk quod  
she yif þei geten þe goode pat þei desiren þei [no]  
mowen nat ben wicked. so is it quod .I. ¶ þan so as  
pat oon *and* pat oper [quod she] desiren good. *and* þe  
goode folk geten good *and* nat þe wicked folk ¶ þan  
nis it no doute pat þe goode folk ne ben myzty *and* þe  
wicked folk ben feble. ¶ who so pat euer quod I  
douteþ of þis. he ne may nat conside þe nature of  
þinges. ne þe consequence of resoun. and ouer þis quod  
she. ¶ yif pat þer ben two þinges pat han o same  
purpos by kynde. *and* pat one of hem pursueþ *and* per-  
formeþ pilke same þinge by naturel office. *and* pat oper  
ne may nat done þilk naturel office. but folweþ by  
oper manere þan is couenable to nature ¶ Hym pat

that he had the power to do it?  
B. No, surely.  
P. A man, then, is esteemed powerful in respect of what he is able to do, and weak in relation to what he is unable to perform.  
B. That is true.  
P. Do you remember that I proved that the will of man, following different pursuits, seeks happiness only?  
Do you recollect too, that it has been shown that happiness is [\* fol. 25 b.] the supreme good of men—and all desire this good, since all seek happiness?  
All men, then, good and bad, seek to acquire good? And it is certain that when men obtain good they become good?  
3212  
B. It is most certain.  
P. Do good men, then, get what they desire?  
B. It seems so.  
P. If evil men obtain the good, they can be no longer evil?  
B. It is so.  
P. Since then both parties pursue the good, which only the virtuous obtain, we must believe that good men are powerful, and that the wicked are weak and feeble?  
B. None can doubt this, save such as either consider not rightly the nature of things, or are incapable of comprehending the force of any reasoning.  
P. If two beings have the same end in view—

3196 *as moche*—so moche3197 *done*—doon*moche*—moche*halden*—halt3201 *whiche*—which3202 *lad*—MS. ladde. C. lad3203 *it hath ben*—MS. I herde

þe. C. it hath ben

3206-8 *goode*—good

3206 [also]—from C.

3207 *al*—alle*It*—*I*—it nerecordeth me

nat quod I

3210-12(1)-16 *goode*—good3214 *wicked*[e]—wikkede

3215 [ne]—from C.

3216 *mowen*—mowe

3217 [quod she]—from C.

3218 *wikked*—wikke (? wikke)3220 *wikked*—wikkede3226 *þilk*—þilke

and one of them accomplishes his purpose by the use of natural means, while the other not using legitimate means does not attain his end—which of these two is the most powerful?

*B.* Illustrate your meaning more clearly.

*P.* The motion of walking is natural to man? And this motion is the natural office of the feet? Do you grant this?

*B.* I do.

*P.* If, then, he who is able to use his feet walks, whilst another lacking this power creeps on his hands—surely he that is able to move naturally upon his feet is more powerful than he who

3243

cannot.

*P.* The good and bad seek the supreme good: the good by the natural means of virtue—the wicked by gratifying divers desires of earthly things (which is not the natural way of obtaining it). Do you think otherwise?

*B.* The consequence is plain, and that follows from what has been granted—that the good are powerful, while the wicked are feeble.

*P.* You rightly anticipate me; for it is a good sign, as physicians well know, when Nature exerts herself and resists the malady. But, as you are so quick of appre-

acomplisip hys purpos kyndely. and 3it he ne acomplisip nat hys owen purpos. wheþer of þise two demest þou for more my3ty. ¶ yif þat I coniecte quod .I. þat þou wilt seye algates. 3it I desire to herkene it more pleynelly of þe. þou nilt nat þan denye quod she þat þe moeuement3 of goynge nis in men by kynde. no for soþe quod I. ne þou ne doutest nat quod she þat pilke naturel office of goynge ne be þe office of feet. I ne doute it nat quod .I. þan quod she yif þat a wy3t be my3ty to moeue and goþ vpon hys feet. and anoþer to whom pilke naturel office of feet lakkeþ. enforceþ hym to gone crepynge vpon hys handes. ¶ whiche of þise two auzte to ben holden more my3ty by ry3t. knyht furþe þe remenaunt quod I. ¶ For no wy3t ne douteþ þat he þat may gone by naturel office of feet. ne be more my3ty

þan he þat ne may nat ¶ but þe souereyne good quod she þat is euenlyche purposed to þe good folk and to badde. þe good folke seken it by naturel office of uertues. and þe shrewes enforcen hem to geten it by dyuerse couetise of erþely þinges. whiche þat nis no naturel office to geten pilke same souereyne goode. trowest þou þat it be any oþer wyse. nay quod .I. for þe consequence is open and shewynge of þinges þat I haue graunted. ¶ þat nedes goode folk moten ben my3ty. and shrewes feble and vnmý3ty. ¶ þou rennest ary3t byfore me quod she. and þis is þe iugement þat is to seyn. ¶ I iuge of þe ry3t as þise leches ben wont forto hopen of seke folk whan þei aperceyuen þat nature is redressed and wipstondeþ to þe maladie. ¶ But for I see þe now al redy to þe vndirstandynge I shal shewe þe more pilke and continuel resouns. ¶ For loke now

3229 *owen*—owne

3231 *wilt*—wolt

*herkene*—herkne

3233 *pleynely*—pleynly

*denye*—denoye

3233 *moeuement3*—Moeuement

3237 *goþ*—MS. goþe

*hys*—hise

3238 *gone*—goon

3239 *hys*—hise

*whiche*—which

3240 *more*—the Moore

*furþe*—forth

3242 *gone*—gon

3245 *good*—goode

3246 *uertues*—vertuus

3247 *whiche*—which

3248 *goode*—good

3253 *byfore*—by-forn

3254 *forto*—to

3255 *seke*—sike

how gretly shewiþ þe feblesse *and* infirmite of wicked folke. þat ne mowen nat come to þat hire naturel entencioun ledeþ hem. *and* zitte, almost pilk naturel entencioun constreineþ hem. ¶ *¶* and what were to deme þan of shrewes. yif pilke naturel helpe hadde for-leten hem. ¶ þe whiche naturel helpe of entencioun goþ alwey byforne hem. *and* is so grete þat vnneþ it may be ouercomen. ¶ Considre þan how gret defaute of power *and* how gret feblesse þere is in grete felonous folk as who seiþ þe gretter þinges þat ben coueitid *and* þe desire nat accomplissid of þe lasse myzt is he þat coueiteth it *and* may nat acomplisse. ¶ And forþi philosophie seiþ þus by souereyne good. ¶ Sherewes ne requere nat lyzt[e] medes ne veyne gaines whiche þei ne may nat folwen ne holden. but þei faylen of pilke some of þe heyzte of þinges þat is to seyne souereyne good. ne þise wrecches ne comen nat to þe effect of souereyne good. \* þe whiche þei enforcen hem oonly to geten by nyztes *and* by dayes. ¶ In þe getyn[g] of whiche goode þe strengþe of good folk. is ful wel ysen. For ryzt so as þou myztest demen hym myzty of goynge þat goþ on hys feet til he myzt[e] come to pilke place fro þe whiche place þere ne lay no wey forþer to be gon. Ryzt so most þou nedes demen hym for ryzt myzty þat getiþ *and* atteiniþ to þe ende of alle þinges þat ben to desire. by-þonde þe whiche ende þat þer nis no þing to desire. ¶ Of whiche power of good folk men may conclude þat wicked men semen to ben bareyne *and* naked of alle strengþe. For whi forleten þei vertues *and* folwen vices. nis it nat for þat þei ne knowen nat þe goodes.

hension, I shall continue this mode of reasoning. The weakness of the wicked is conspicuous—they cannot attain the end to which their natural disposition prompts and almost compels them; what would become of them without this natural prompting, so powerful and irresistible? Consider how great is the impotence of the wicked. (The greater the things desired, but unaccomplished, the less is the power of him that desires, and is unable to attain his end.) The wicked seek after no trivial things—which they fail to obtain; but they aspire in

3275 vain to the sovereign good, which they endeavour [\* fol. 26.] day and night to obtain. The good attain the end of their desires, and therein their power is manifested. For as you deem him a good walker that goes to the end of his journey, so you must esteem him powerful that attains his desires, beyond which there is nothing to desire. Wicked men, then, are destitute of those powers which the good so amply possess. Wherefore do they leave virtue, and follow vice? Is it because they are ignorant of good?

3259 *wicked*—wikkede  
3260 *come*—comyn  
3261 *pilk*—thilke  
3262 *deme*—demen  
3263-4 *helpe*—help  
3264 *whiche*—which  
3265 *goþ*—MS. goþe  
3265 *grete*—gret  
3265 *vnneþ*—vnnethe  
3265 *be ouercomen*—ben ouercome  
3267 *þere*—ther

*grete*—wikkede  
3268 *þinges*—thing  
3268 *ben*—is  
3271 *Sherewes ne requere*—ne shrewes ne requeren  
3272 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte  
3272 *veyne*—veyn  
3272 *nat*—omitted  
3276 *whiche*—which  
3277 *getyn[g]*—getinge  
3277 *whiche goodes*—which good  
3278 *ysen*—MS. and C. ysene

3279 *goþ*—MS. goþe  
3280 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
3281 *þere*—ther  
3281 *lay*—laye  
3281 *forþer*—forthere  
3281 *be*—ben  
3283 *desire*—desired  
3284 *þat*—omitted  
3285 *whiche*—the which  
3285 *þat*—þat the  
3286 *ben*—be



What is more weak and base than the blindness of ignorance? Or do they know the way they ought to follow, but are led astray by lust and covetousness? And so, indeed, weak-minded men are overpowered by intemperance, for they cannot resist vicious temptations. Do they willingly desert Good and turn to Evil? If they do so, they not only cease to be powerful, but even cease to exist. For those who neglect the common end of all beings, cease to exist. You may marvel that I assert that the wicked, the majority of the human race, have no existence—

3304 but it is, however, most true. That the wicked are bad I do not deny—but I do not admit that they have any real existence. You may call a corpse a dead man, but you cannot with propriety call it a man. So the vicious are profligate men, but I cannot confess they absolutely exist. That thing exists that preserves its rank, nature, and constitution, but when it loses these essentials it ceases to be. But, you may say that the wicked have a power to act, nor do I deny it; but their power is an effect of weakness. They can do evil, but this they could

¶ But what ping is more feble *and* more caitif þan is þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce. or ellys þei knowen ful wel whiche pinges þat þei auzten to folwen ¶ but lecherye *and* couetise ouerproweþ hem mysturned. ¶ *and* certis so doþ distemperaunce to feble men. þat ne mowen nat wrastle azeins þe vices ¶ Ne knowen þei nat þan wel þat þei foreleten þe good wilfully. *and* turnen hem vilfully to vices. ¶ *And* in þis wise þei ne forleten nat oonly to ben myzty. but þei forleten al outerly in any wise forto ben ¶ For þei þat forleten þe comune fyn of alle pinges þat ben. þei for-leten also þerwiþ al forto ben. *and* peraurenture it sholde semen to som folk þat þis were a merueille to seyne þat shrewes whiche þat contienen þe more partie of men ne ben nat. ne han no beyng. ¶ but napeles it is so. *and* þus stant þis ping for þei þat ben shrewes I denye nat þat þei ben shrewes. but I denye *and* sey[e] symplely *and* pleylnly þat þei [ne] ben nat. ne han no beyng. for ryȝt as þou myztest seyn of þe careyne of a man þat it were a ded man. ¶ but þou ne myztest nat symplely callen it a man. ¶ So graunt[e] I wel for soþe þat vicious folk ben wicked. but I ne may nat graunten absolutely *and* symplely þat þei ben. ¶ For þilk ping þat wiþ holdeþ ordre *and* kepiþ nature. þilk ping is *and* hap beyng. but þat ping þat faileþ of þat. þat is to seyne he þat forletip naturel ordre he for-letip þilk beyng þat is set in hys nature. but þou wolt sein þat shrewes mowen. ¶ Certys þat ne denye I nat. ¶ but certys hir power ne descendeþ nat of strengþe but of feblesse. for þei mowen don wickednesses. þe whiche þei ne myzten nat don yif þei myzten dwelle in þe forme *and*

3291 *auzten to folwen* —  
owhten folwe  
3293 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth  
3294 *wrastle*—wrastlen  
3295 *vilfully*—wilsfully  
3297 *outerly*—owtrely  
3301 *seyne*—seyen  
3304-5 *denye*—denoye

3305 *sey[e] symplely* — seye  
sympeli  
3306 [ne]—from C.  
3307 *seyne*—seyen  
3309 *graunt[e]*—graunte  
3311-12 *þilk*—þilke  
3312 *hap*—MS. hape  
3313 *þat* (1)—what

3313 *seyne*—seyen  
3314 *þilk*—þilke  
3315 *set*—MS. sette, C. set  
3316 *denye*—denoye  
3318 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
3319 *myzten* (1)—myhte  
*dwelle*—dwelling

in þe doynge of goode folke. ¶ And pilke power shewep ful euydently þat þei ne mowen ryzt nauzt. ¶ For so as I haue gadered *and* proued a lytel her byforn þat yuel is nauzt. *and* so as shrewes mowen oonly but shrewednesse. þis conclusioun is al clere. þat shrewes ne mowen ryzt nat to han power. and for as moche as þou vndirstonde whiche is þe strengþe þat is power of shrewes. I haue diffinised a lytel here byforn þat no þing nis so myzty as souereyne good ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. [*and* thilke same souereyn good may don non yuel // Certes no quod I] ¶ Is þer any wyzt þan quod she þat wenip þat men mowen don alle þinges. No man quod .I. but yif he be out of hys witte. ¶ but certys shrewes mowen don yuel quod she. ¶ 3e wolde god quod I þat þei ne myzten don none. þat quod she so as he þat is myzty to done oonly but good[e] þinges may don alle þinges. and þei þat ben myzty to done yuel[e] þinges ne mowen nat alle þinges. þan is þis open þing *and* manifest þat þei þat mowen don yuel beu of lasse power. and 3itte to proue þis conclusioun þere helpeþ me þis þat I haue shewed here byforn. þat al power is to be noumbred amonge þinges þat men auzten requere. *and* haue shewed þat alle þinges þat auzten ben desired ben referred to good ryzt as to a manere heyzte of hyr nature. ¶ But for to mowen don yuel *and* felonye ne may nat ben referred to good. þan nis nat yuel of þe noumbre of þinges þat auzten. \*be desired. but al power auzt[e] ben desired *and* requered. ¶ þan is it open *and* cler þat þe power ne þe moeuyng of shrewes nis no powere. *and* of alle þise þinges it shewep wel þat

not do, if they retained the power of doing good. This power, then, clearly shows their impotence. For as evil is nothing, it is clear that while the wicked can only do evil they can do nothing. That you may understand the force of this power, I have proved that nothing is more powerful than the sovereign good. *B.* That is true. *P.* And that supreme good can do no evil? *B.* Certainly not. *P.* Is there any one who thinks that man can do all things? *B.* No sane man can think so. *P.* But men may do evil. *B.* I would to God they could not. *P.* Since he that can do good, can  
3336

do all things, and he that has power to do evil cannot do all things; therefore the evil-doers are less powerful. Let me add too that power is one of the things to be desired, and that all such things are to be referred to the chief good (the perfection of their nature). But the power of doing evil has no relation to that Good, therefore it is not desirable; but as [\* fol. 26 b.] all power is desirable, it is clear that the ability to do evil is not power. It clearly follows from this reasoning,

3320 *goode*—good  
3321 *shrewednesse*—shrew-  
ednesse  
3325 *clere*—cleer  
3326 *nat*—power—nawht  
ne han no power  
3336 *whiche*—which  
þat is—of this  
3327 *here*—her  
3328 *nis*—is  
3329 *soþe*—soth

3329, 3330 [*and thilke* —  
*quod I*]—from C.  
3334 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*none þat*—non thanne  
3335 *done*—doon  
*good[e]*—goode  
3336 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
*done*—don  
3337 *yuel[e]*—yuele  
þis—it  
3339 *don*—MS. done, C. don

3339 *3itte*—yit  
þere—ther  
3340 *shewed here byforn*—  
ishewed her by-forn  
*at*—alle  
3341 *amonge*—among  
3344 *don*—MS. done, C. don  
3346 *auzten be*—owhte ben  
3347 *at*—alle  
*auzt[e]*—owhte

that the good only are powerful while the vicious are feeble. And Plato's opinion is hereby verified that the *wise* only have the power to do what they desire; the wicked may follow the dictates of their lusts, but their great aim and desire, i. e. HAPPINESS, they can never attain. The wicked may gratify their desires, thinking to attain the chief good (for which they wish), but they can never possess it, for impiety and vice can never be crowned with happiness.

[The 14<sup>th</sup> Metur.]  
Whoever might strip of their purple coverings, proud kings, who, surrounded by their guards,

3364 sit on lofty thrones, and whose stern looks wear fierce threatenings, and boiling breasts breathe fury; would see those mighty lords inwardly fettered, and tormented by lust, passion, grief, and delusive hopes.

3371 Since, then, so many tyrants bear away over one head—that lord, oppressed by so many masters (i. e. vices), is weak and feeble, and his actions are not obedient to his will.

þe goode folk ben certeynly my3ty. *and* þe shrewes ben douteles vnmy3ty ¶ And it is clere *and* open þat pilke sentence of plato is uerray *and* soþe. þat seyh þat only wisemen may [doon] þat þei desiren. *and* shrewes mowen haunten þat hem lykeþ. but þat þei desiren þat is to seyne to comen to souereyne good þei ne han no power to acomplissen þat. ¶ For shrewes don þat hem list whan by þe þinges in whiche þei deliten þei wenen to atteyne to pilke good þat þei desiren. but þei ne geten ne atteynen nat þer to. ¶ for vices ne comen nat to blisfulnesse. 3360

## QUOS UIDES SEDERE CELSOS.

Who so þat þe couertures of her veyn apparailles my3t[e] strepen of þise proude kynges þat þou seest sitten on hey3e in her chayeres glyterynge in shynynge purple envyroned wip sorweful armures manasyng wip cruel mouþe. blowyng by woodnesse of herte. ¶ He sholde se þan þat ilke lordes beren wip izne hir corages ful streyte cheynes for leccherye tormentiþ hem on þat oon syde wip gredy venymys *and* troublable Ire þat araiseþ in hem þe floodes of troublynge tourmentiþ vpon þat oper side hir pouzt. or sorwe halt hem wery or ycauzt. or slidyng *and* disseyuynge hope tourmentiþ hem. And þerfore syn þou seest on heed. þat is to seyne oon tyraunt bere so many[e] tyrauntis. þan ne doþ pilk tyraunt nat þat he desirip. syn he is cast doun wip so many[e] wicked lordes. þat is to seyn wip so many[e] vices. þat han so wicked lordshipes ouer hym. 3377

3351 *clere*—cler  
3352 *soþe*—soth  
    *þat seyh*—MS. but siþe, C.  
    *þat seyth*  
3353 [*doon*]*—*from C.  
3355 *seyne*—seyn  
3357 *whiche*—which  
3361-63 *her*—hir  
3362 *my3t[e]*—myhte

3363 *hey3e*—heygh  
3364 *sorweful*—sorwful  
3365 *mouþe*—Mowth  
3366 *se*—seen  
    *like*—thilke  
3368 *on*—in  
3369 *hem*—hym  
3371 *disseyuynge*—decey-  
    yng

3373 *seyne*—seyn  
    *bere*—beeren  
3373-75-76 *many[e]*—manye  
3373 *tyrauntis*—tyranyes  
3374 *doþ*—MS. doþe  
    *pilk*—thilke  
3376 *doun*—down  
    *wicked*—wikkede  
3376 *wicked*—wikkedly

## VIDES NE IGITUR QUANTO.

[The *ij.*<sup>de</sup> prose.]

Seest þou nat þan in how gret filþe þise shrewes ben  
 ywrapped. *and* wiþ whiche cleernesse þise good  
 folk shynen. In þis sheweþ it wel þat to good folk ne  
 lakkeþ neuer mo hir medes. ne shrewes ne lakken  
 neuer mo tourmentis. for of alle þinges þat ben ydon  
 pilke þing for whiche any þing is doon. it semeþ as by  
 ryzt þat pilke þing be þe mede of þat. as þus. ¶ Yif a  
 man renneþ in þe stadie or in þe forlonge for þe corone.  
 þan lieþ þe mede in þe corone for whiche he renneþ.  
 ¶ And I haue shewed þat blisfulnesse is pilke same  
 good for whiche þat alle þingus ben don. þan is pilke  
 same good purposed to þe werkes of mankynde ryzt as  
 a comune mede. whiche mede ne may ben disseuered  
 fro good folk. for no wyzt as by ryzt fro þennes forþe  
 þat hym lakkiþ goodnesse ne shal ben cleped good.  
 For whiche þing folk of good[e] maneres her medes ne  
 forsaken hem neuer mo. For al be it so þat sherewes  
 waxen as wood as hem list azeynes good[e] folk. 3itte  
 neuer þe les þe corone of wise men ne shal nat fallen  
 ne faden. ¶ For foreine shrewednesse ne bynymeþ  
 nat fro þe corages of good[e] folk hire propre honoure.  
 but yif þat any wyzt reioiseþ hem of goodnesse þat þei  
 had[de] taken fro wiþoute. as who seiþ yif [þat] any  
 wyzt had[de] hys goodnesse of any oþer man þan of  
 hym self. certys he þat 3af hym pilke goodnesse or  
 ellys som oþer wyzt myzt[e] bynym[e] it hym. but for  
 as moche as to euery wyzt hys owen propre bounte  
 3eueþ hym hys mede. þan at arst shal he faylen of  
 mede whan he forletip to ben good. *and* at þe laste so  
 as alle medes ben requered for men wenen þat þei ben

See you not  
 in how great and  
 filthy a mire the  
 wicked wallow?  
 This is a proof  
 that good folks  
 do not go unre-  
 warded, nor do  
 the evil-doers  
 escape punish-  
 ment. Every ac-  
 tion is done for a  
 certain end, and  
 that end is the re-  
 ward of the action.  
 But Happiness is  
 that good for  
 which all things  
 are done. There-  
 fore happiness is  
 the reward which  
 all the human  
 race seek as the  
 reward of their  
 actions. This  
 good is insepar-  
 able from the vir-  
 tuous, therefore  
 virtue can never  
 want its reward.  
 Evil men may  
 rage as they  
 3392

please against the  
 good, but the  
 crown of the wise  
 shall not fall nor  
 fade. The wicked-  
 ness of another  
 cannot deprive a  
 virtuous soul of  
 its own honour.  
 If a man pride  
 himself on the  
 possession of an  
 advantage re-  
 ceived from  
 another, he may  
 be deprived of it,  
 either by the  
 giver or by others.  
 But, as the re-  
 ward of the  
 virtuous is derived  
 from virtue, a  
 man cannot lose  
 this meed unless  
 he ceases to be  
 virtuous. Lastly,  
 since a reward is  
 desired because it  
 is supposed to be  
 a good, can we be-  
 lieve that he who  
 is capable of good  
 is deprived of the  
 recompence?

3379 *whiche*—which  
 3390 *good*—goode  
 3391 *ne* (3)—omitted  
 3393 *whiche*—which  
 3395 *forlonge*—forlong  
 3396-98-99 *whiche*—which  
 3391 *for þe*—forth  
 3393 *whiche*—which

3393 *good[e]*—goode  
 3395 *wood*—woode  
 3396 *good[e]*—goode  
 3396 *les*—leese  
 3396 *ne*—omitted  
 3398 *good[e]*—goode  
 3399 *reioiseþ*—reioyse  
 3399 *hem*—hym

3399 *þei had[de]*—he hadde  
 3400 *[þat]*—from C.  
 3401 *had[de]*—hadde  
 3402 *selþ*—M.S. selk  
 3403 *myzt[e]* *bynym[e]*—  
 myhte be-nyne  
 3404 *owen*—owne  
 3406 *laste*—last

What reward  
shall he receive?  
Certainly the  
[° fol. 27.]  
sweetest and richest  
of all rewards.  
Call to mind that  
excellent corollary  
I have already  
given thee, and  
reason thus:—  
Since the supreme  
good is happiness,  
it follows that all  
good men are  
happy in as much  
as they are good;  
but if they are  
happy they must  
become as it were  
gods. The re-  
ward (i.e. divini-  
ty) of the righte-  
ous is such that  
no time can im-  
pair it, no power  
can diminish it,  
nor can any  
wickedness ob-  
scure it. Hence,  
then, happiness  
belongs to good  
men, punishment  
inseparably at-  
tends the wicked.  
For since good  
and evil are con-

3424

traries, so are  
rewards and  
punishments. It  
is evident that  
rewards follow  
good actions, and  
punishments at-  
tend evil actions;  
then as virtue it-  
self is the reward  
of the virtuous,  
so vice is the  
punishment of  
the vicious. He  
who is punished  
with pain and  
uneasiness knows  
that he is afflicted  
with evil. If,  
then, the wicked  
did rightly under-  
stand themselves  
they would per-  
ceive that they  
are not exempted  
from punishment.  
Hence vice, the  
extreme and  
worst kind of evil,  
not only afflicts  
them, but infects  
and entirely

good[e]. who is he þat wolde deme þat he þat is ryȝt  
myȝty of goode were partles of mede. \*and of what  
mede shal he be gerdoned. certys of ryȝt faire mede  
and ryȝt greet abouen alle medes. ¶ Remembre þe of  
þilk noble corolarie þat I ȝaf þe a lytel here byforne.  
and gadre it to gidre in þis manere. so as god hym self  
is blisfulnesse. þan is it clere and certeyn. þat alle good  
folk ben makid blisful for þei ben good[e]. and þilke  
folk þat ben blisful it accordip and is couenable to ben  
golde[s]. þan is þe mede of goode folk swiche. þat no  
day [ne] shal enpeyren it. ne no wickednesse shal en-  
dirken it. ne power of no wyȝt ne shal nat amenusen it  
þat is to seyn to ben maked goddes. ¶ and syn it is  
þus þat goode men ne faylen neuer mo of hire medes.  
¶ certys no wise man ne may doute of þe vndeportable  
peyne of shrewes. ¶ þat is to seyn þat þe peyne of  
shrewes ne departip nat from hem self neuer mo.  
¶ For so as goode and yuel and peyne and medes ben  
contrarie it mot nedes ben þat ryȝt as we seen by-tiden  
in gerdoun of goode. þat also mot þe peyne of yuel  
answere by þe contrarie partye to shrewes. now þan so  
as bounte and prowesse ben þe medes to goode folk.  
also is shrewednesse it self torment to shrewes ¶ þan  
who so þat euer is entecched and defouled wip yuel.  
yif shrewes wolen þan preisen hem self may it semen  
to hem þat þei ben wip outhen partye of tourment. syn  
þei ben swiche þat þe [vtteriste] wikkednesse / þat is to  
seyn wikkede thewes / which þat is the] outereste and  
þe w[or]ste kynde of shrewednesse ne defouliþ nat ne  
entecchiþ nat hem oonly but infectiþ and enuenemyþ  
hem gretely ¶ And al so loke on shrewes þat ben þe

3404 good[e]—goode  
3405 wolde—wolds  
3406 goode—good  
of (2) of the  
3411 greet—grote  
3412 here byforne—her by-  
forne  
3413 god—good  
3414 is (1)—his

3414 clere—cleer  
3415 good[e]—goode  
3417 godde[s]—goddes  
swiche—swich  
3418 [ne]—from C.  
endirken—derken  
3422 wise man—wyman  
þe—omitted  
vndeportable—MS. vndir-

partable, C. vndeport-  
able  
3423 of (1)—of the  
3428 answer—answery  
þe—omitted  
3434 [vtteriste]—is the]—  
from C.  
3438 gretely—gretly

contrarie partye of goode men. how grete peyne fellow-  
shipeþ *and* folweþ hem. ¶ For þou hast lerned a litel  
here byforn þat al þing þat is *and* hap beyng is oon.  
*and* pilke same oon is good. þan is þis consequence þat  
it semeþ wel. þat al þat is *and* hap beyng is good. þis  
is to seyne. as who seiþ þat beyng *and* vnite *and*  
goodnesse is al oon. *and* in þis manere it folweþ þan.  
þat al þing þat faileþ to ben good. it styntiþ forto be.  
*and* forto haue any beyng. wher fore it is þat shrewes  
stynten forto ben þat þei weren. but pilke oþer forme  
of mankynde. þat is to seyne þe forme of þe body wiþ  
oute. shewiþ ȝit þat þise shrewes were somtyme men.  
¶ wher fore whan þei ben peruerted *and* torned in to  
malice. certys þan han þei forlorn þe nature of man-  
kynde. but so as oonly bounte *and* prowesse may en-  
hawnse euery man ouer oþer men. þan mot it nedes be  
þat shrewes whiche þat shrewednesse hap cast out of þe  
condicioun of mankynde ben put vnder þe merite *and*  
þe deserte of men. þan bitidip it þat yif þou seest a  
wyȝt þat be transformed in to vices. þou ne mayst nat  
wene þat he be a man. ¶ For ȝif he [be] ardaunt in  
auarice. *and* þat he be a rauynour by violence of  
foreine rychesse. þou shalt seyn þat he is lyke to a  
wolf. *and* yif he be felonous *and* wiþ out reste *and*  
exercise hys tonge to chidynges. þou shalt lykene hym  
to þe hounde. *and* yif he be a preue awaitour yhid *and*  
reioyseþ hym to rauysshe by wyles. þou shalt seyne  
hym lyke to þe fox whelpes. ¶ And yif he be dis-  
tempre *and* quakiþ for ire men shal wene þat he bereþ  
þe corage of a lyoun. *and* yif he be dredeful *and* fleyng  
*and* dredeþ pinges þat ne auȝten nat ben dred. men

pollutes them.  
But contemplate  
the punishment  
of the wicked.  
You have been  
taught that  
unity is essential  
to being and is  
good—and all that  
3443

have this unity  
are good; what-  
soever, then, fails  
to be good ceases  
to exist. So that  
it appears that  
evil men must  
cease to be what  
they were. That  
they were once  
men, the outward  
form of the body,  
which still re-  
mains, clearly  
testifies. Where-  
fore, when they  
degenerate into  
wickedness they

3452  
lose their human  
nature. But as  
virtue alone ex-  
alts one man  
above other men,  
it is evident that  
vice, which  
divests a man of  
his nature, must  
sink him below  
humanity. You  
cannot, therefore,  
esteem him to be  
a man whom you  
see thus trans-  
formed by his  
vices. The greedy  
robber, you will  
say, is like a wolf.  
3461

He who gives no  
rest to his abusive  
tongue, you may  
liken to a hound.  
Does he delight  
in fraud and trick-  
ery? then is he  
like young foxes.  
Is he intemperate  
in his anger? then  
men will  
compare him to a  
raging lion. If he  
3468  
be a coward, he  
will be likened to

3439 *groto*—gret  
3441 *al*—alle  
hap—MS. hape  
3443 *al*—alle  
hap—MS. hape  
3446 *al*—alle  
3447 *haue*—han  
3448 *stynten*—MS. styntent

3450 *were somtyme*—weeren  
whilom  
3462 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne,  
C. forlorn  
3463 *as*—omitted  
*enhawnse*—enhawsen  
3465 *whiche*—which  
hap—MS. hape

3459 [be]—from C.  
3464 *yhid*—MS. yhidde, C.  
I-hidd  
3465 *seyne*—seyn  
3468 *dredeful*—dredful  
3469 *ben*—to ben  
dred — MS. dredde, C.  
dredd

a *hart*. If he be slow, dull, and lazy, then is he like an *ass*. Is he fickle and inconstant? Then is he like a *bird*. Doth he wallow in filthy lusts? Then doth he roll himself in the mire like a nasty *cow*. It follows, then, that he who ceases to be virtuous, ceases to be a man; and, since he cannot attain divinity, he is turned into a beast.

shal holde hym lyke to þe herte. *and* yif he be slowe *and* astoned *and* lache. he lyueþ as an *asse*. *and* yif he be lyzt *and* vnstedfast of corage *and* chaungeþ ay his studies. he is lickened to briddes. ¶ *and* yif he be plounged in foule *and* vnclene luxuries. he is wiþholden in þe foule delices of þe foule soowe. ¶ þan folweþ it þat he þat forletip bountee *and* prowesse. he forletip to ben a man. syn he ne may nat passe in to þe condicioun of god. he is tourned in to a beest. 3478

[\* fol. 27 b.]

\*V[E]LA NARICI DUCIS.

[The 3<sup>rd</sup> Metur.]

Ulysses was driven by the eastern winds upon the shores of that isle where Circe dwelt, who, having entertained her guests with magic draughts, transformed them into divers shapes—one into a boar, another into a lion;

3486

some into howling wolves, and others into Indian tigers.

But Mercury, the Arcadian god, rescued Ulysses from the Circean charms. Yet his mariners, having drunk of her infected drinks, were changed to swine, and fed on acorns.

Eviuþ þe wynde aryueþ þe sayles of vlixes duc of þe contre of narice. *and* hys wandryng shippes by þe see in to þe isle þere as Circe þe fayre goddessse douzter of þe sonne dwelleþ þat medlyþ to hir newe gestes drynkes þat ben touched *and* makend wiþ enchauntmentz. *and* after þat hir hande myzty of þe herbes had[de] chaunged hir gestes in to dyuerse maneres. þat oon of hem is couered his face wiþ forme of a boor. þat oþer is chaunged in to a lyoun of þe contre of mar-morike. *and* his nayles *and* his teþe wexen. ¶ þat oþer of hem is newliche chaunged in to a wolf. *and* howeliþ whan he wolde wepe. þat oþer goþ debonairly in þe house as a tigre of Inde. but al be it so þat þe godhed of mercurie þat is cleped þe bride of arcadie hap had mercie of þe duc vlixes bysegged wiþ diuerse yueles *and* hap vnbounden hym fro þe pestilence of hys oosteresse algates þe rowers *and* þe maryners hadden by

3496 þis ydrawen in to hir mouþes *and* dronken þe wicked[e]

3470 holde—holden

lyke—lyk

herte—hert

slowe—slowh

3473 vnstedfast—vnstidefast

his—hise

3475 þan—MS. pat, C. than-

ne

3477 passe—passen

3479 aryueþ—aryuede

vlixes—MS. vliuxes, C.

vlixes

3481 Circe—Circes

3483 enchauntmentz—en-

chauntementz

3484 hande—hand

of—ouer

3485 had[de]—hadde

gestes—MS. goostes, C.

gestes

3486 boor—boers

3489 his (1)—hise

his teþe—hise teth

3489 newliche—neweliche

3490 goþ—MS. goþe

3491 house—hows

3492 bride—bryd

hap—MS. hape

3493 mercie—MS. mercurie,

C. mercy

3494 hap—MS. hape

3495 oosteresse—oostesse

3496 wicked[e]—wikkede

drynkes þei þat were woxen swyne hadden by þis  
 chaunged hire mete of brede forto ete acorns of ookes. 3498  
 non of hir lymes ne dwellip wip hem hoole. but  
 þei han lost þe voys *and* þe body. Oonly hire pouȝt  
 dwelleþ wip hem stable þat wepiþ *and* bywailip þe  
 monstrous chaungynge þat þei suffren. ¶ O ouer lyȝt  
 hand. as who seiþ. ¶ O feble *and* lyȝt is þe hand of  
 Circes þe enchaunteresse þat chaungeþ þe bodies of folk  
 in to bestes to regarde *and* to comparisoun of mutacioun  
 þat is makid by vices. ne þe herbes of circes ne ben nat  
 myȝty. for al be it so þat þei may chaungen þe lymes  
 of þe body. ¶ algates ȝit þei may nat chaunge þe  
 hertes. for wip inne is yhid þe strengþe *and* þe vigour 3509  
 of men in þe secre toure of hire hertys. þat is to seyn  
 þe strengþe of resoun. but pilke uenymys of vices to-  
 drawen a man to hem more myȝtily þan þe venym of  
 circes. ¶ For vices ben so cruel þat þei percen *and*  
 þoruȝ passen þe corage wip inne. *and* þouȝ þei ne anoye  
 nat þe body. ȝitte vices wooden to distroien men by  
 wounde of pouȝt. 3516

All traces of the human form were lost, and they were bereft of speech. Their souls, unchanged, bewailed their dreadful fate.

O most weak, are Circe's powers compared with the potency of vice, to transform the human shape!

Circe's herbs may change the body, but cannot touch the mind, the inward strength of man.

But vice is more potent than Circe's poisonous charms.

Though it leaves the body whole, it pierces the inner man, and inflicts a deadly wound upon the soul.

## TUNC EGO FATEOR INQUAM.

þan seide I þus I confesse *and* am aknowe quod I. ne  
 I ne se nat þat men may seyn as by ryȝt. þat  
 shrewes ne ben nat chaunged in to beestes by þe  
 qualite of hir soules. ¶ Al be it so þat þei kepen ȝitte  
 þe forme of þe body of mankynde. but I nolde nat of  
 shrewes of whiche þe pouȝt cruel woodeþ alwey in to  
 destruccioun of good[e] men. þat it were leueful to hem  
 to done þat. ¶ Certys quod she ne it nis nat leueful  
 to hem as I shal wel shewen þe in couenable place.  
 ¶ But napeles yif so were þat pilke þat men wenen ben 3526

[The farther prose.]

B. I confess that vicious men are rightly called beasts. They retain the outward form of man, but the qualities of their souls prove them to be beasts. I wish, however, that the wicked were without the power to annoy and hurt good men.

P. They have no power, as I shall presently show you.

3497 were woxen swyne —  
 weeren woxen swyn  
 3498 chaunged—Ichaunged  
 brede—bred  
 forto—MS. *and* forto  
 ete acorns—eten akkornes  
 3499 hoole—hoool

3501 wepiþ—MS. kepiþ, C.  
 weepith  
 3502 monstrous—MS. mon-  
 stronous, C. Monstruous  
 3504 Circes—MS. Cirtes  
 folk—folkys  
 3509 yhid—MS. yhidde, C.

3515 wooden—MS. wolden,  
 C. wooden  
 3517 aknowe—aknowe it  
 3518 seyn—sayn  
 3523 good[e]—goode  
 3524 done—don  
 3526 ben—be



But were this power, which men ascribe to them, taken away from the wicked, they would be relieved of the greatest part of their punishment. The wicked are more unhappy when they have accomplished their evil designs than when they fail to do so. If it is a miserable thing to will evil, it is a greater unhappiness to have the power to execute it, without which power the wicked desires would languish without effect. Since, then, each of these three things (i. e. the will, the power, and the accomplishment of evil) hath its misery, therefore a threefold wretchedness afflicts those who both will, can, and do commit sin.

3544

B. I grant it—but still I wish the vicious were without this misfortune.

[\* fol. 28.]  
P. They shall be despoiled of it sooner than you wish perhaps, or than they themselves imagine. In the narrow limits of this life, nothing, however tardy it appears, can seem to an immortal soul to have a very long duration. The great hopes, and the subtle machinations of the wicked, are often suddenly frustrated, by which an end is put to their wickedness. If vice renders

leueful for shrewes were bynomen hem. so þat þei ne myzten nat anoyen or don harme to goode men. ¶ Certys a gret party of þe peyne to shrewes shulde ben allegged and releued. ¶ For al be it so þat þis ne seme nat credible þing perauenture to somme folk ȝit mot it nedes be þat shrewes ben more wrecches and vnsely. whan þei may don and performe þat þei coueiten [than yif they myhte nat complyssen þat they coueyten]. ¶ For yif so be þat it be wrecchednesse to wilne to don yuel: þan is it more wrecchednesse to mowen don yuel. wiþ oute whiche moeuyng þe wrecched wille sholde languisshe wiþ oute effecte. ¶ þan syn þat eueryche of þise þinges haþ hys wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne wil to done yuel. and moeuyng to done yuel. it mot nedes be. þat þei (shrewes) ben constreyned by þre vnselynesses þat wolen and mowen and performen felonyes and shrewednesses. ¶ I accorde me quod I. but I desire gretely þat shrewes losten sone þilke vnselynesses. þat is to seyne þat shrewes were despoyled of moeuyng to don yuel. ¶ so shullen þei quod she. sonnere perauenture þen þou woldest \*or sonnere þen þei hem self wenen to lakken mowyng to done yuel. ¶ For þere nis no þing so late in so short boundes of þis lijf þat is longe to abide. namelyche to a corage inmortal. Of whiche shrewes þe grete hope and þe heye compassyngus of shrewednesse is often destroyed by a sodeyne ende or þei ben war. and þat þing establiþ to shrewes þe ende of hir shrewednesse. ¶ For yif þat shrewednesse makipe wrecches. þan mot he nedes be most wrecched þat lengest is a shrewe. þe whiche wicked shrewes wolde ydemen aldirmost vnsely and

3527 for—to  
3528 myzten—myhte  
don—MS. done, C. doon  
harme—harm  
3529 gret—MS. grete, C. gret  
3533-36 don—MS. done, C. doon  
3533-34 [than—coueyten]—from C.  
3537 moeuyng—mowyng

3537 wille—wil  
3539 hap—MS. hape  
seyne—seyn  
3540 done (1)—doon  
moeuyng to done—Mow-  
yng to don  
mot—MS. mote, C. mot  
3544 gretely—gretly  
3545 seyne—seyn  
were—weeren

3545 moeuyng—mowyng  
3548 wenen—weene  
to lakken—yuel—omit-  
ted  
3549 þere—ther  
so (2)—the  
3550 longe—long  
3552 shrewednesse—shrew-  
ednesses  
often—ofte

caytifs yif þat hir shrewednes ne were yfinissed. at þe leste weye by þe outerest[e] deef. for [yif] I haue concluded soþe of þe vnselynesse of shrewednesse. þan shewep it clerely þat pilke shrewednesse is wiþ outen ende þe whiche is certeyne to ben perdurable. ¶ Certys quod I þis [conclusion] is harde *and* wonderful to graunte. ¶ But I knowe wel þat it accordeþ moche to [the] pinges þat I haue graunted her byforne. ¶ þou hast quod she þe ryzt estimacioun of þis. but who so euere wene þat it be an harde ping to acorde hym to a conclusioun. it is ryzt þat he shewe þat somme of þe premisses ben fals. or ellys he mot shewe þat þe colasioun of preposiciouns nis nat spedful to a necessarie conclusioun. ¶ and yif it be nat so. but þat þe premisses ben ygranted þer nis nat whi he sholde blame þe argument. for þis ping þat I shal telle þe nowe ne shal not seme lasse wondirful. but of þe pinges þat ben taken al so it is necessarie as who so seiþ it folweþ of þat whiche þat is purposed byforne. what is þat quod I. ¶ certys quod she þat is þat þat pise wicked shrewes ben more blysful or ellys lasse wrecches. þat byen þe tourmentes þat þei han deserued. þan yif no peyne of Iustice ne chastied[e] hem. ne þis ne seye I nat now for þat any man myzt[e] þenk[e] þat þe maneres of shrewes ben coriged *and* chastised by veniaunce. *and* þat þei ben brouzt to þe ryzt wey by þe drede of þe tourment. ne for þat þei zeuen to oper folk ensample to fleyen from vices. ¶ But I vndirstonde ȝitte [in] an oper manere þat shrewes ben more vnsely whan þei ne ben nat punissed al be it so þat þere ne ben had no resoun or lawe of correccioun. ne none ensample of lokyng. ¶ And what manere

men wretched, the longer they are vicious the longer must they be miserable. And they would be infinitely wretched if death did not put an end to their crimes. It is clear, as I have already shown, that eternal misery is infinite. *B.* This consequence appears to be just, but difficult to assent to. *P.* You think rightly; but if you cannot assent to my conclusion you ought to show that the premises are false, or that the consequences are unfairly deduced; for if the premises be granted, you cannot reject the inferences from them. What I am about to say is not less wonderful, and it follows

3574 necessarily from the same premises. *B.* What is that? *P.* That the wicked who have been punished for their crimes, are happier than if justice had allowed them to go unpunished. I do not appeal to popular arguments, that punishment corrects vice, that the fear of chastisement leads them to take the right path, and that the sufferings of evil-doers deter others from vice, but I believe that guilty men, unpunished, become much more unhappy in another way. 3588

3558 *shrewednes*—shrewed-  
nesse  
yfinissed—fynished  
3559 *weye*—wey  
outerest[e]—owtteryte  
[yif]—from C.  
3560 *soþe*—soth  
3561 *clerely*—cleerly  
3563 [conclusion]—from C.

3563 *hardo*—hard  
3564 [the]—from C.  
3567 *hardo*—hard  
3568 *fals*—false  
3573 *nowe*—now  
3575 *who so seiþ*—ho seyth  
whiche—whiche  
3578 *byen*—a-byen  
3579 *chastied[e]*—chastysede

3590 *myzt[e]*—myhte  
3591 *þenk[e]*—thinke  
3584 *zeuen*—MS. ȝeue, C.  
yeuen  
fleyen—flen  
3585 *ȝitte*—yif  
[in]—from C.  
3588 *none*—non

B. In what way do you mean?

P. Are not good people happy, and evil folk miserable?

B. Yes.

P. If good be added to the wretchedness of a man, will not he be happier than another whose misery has no element of good in it?

B. It seems so.

P. And if to the same wretched being another misery be annexed, does not he become more wretched than he whose misery is alleviated by the participation of some good?

3602

B. He does.

P. When evil men are punished they have a degree of good annexed to their wretchedness, to wit, the punishment itself, which as it is the effect of justice is good. And when these wretches escape punishment something more of ill (i. e. exemption from punishment) is added to their condition.

B. I cannot deny it.

P. Much more unhappy are the wicked when they enjoy an unmerited impunity than when they suffer a lawful chastisement. It is just to punish evildoers, and unjust that they should escape punishment. [\* fol. 28 b.]

ment.

B. Nobody denies that.

P. Everything, too, which is just

shal þat ben quod I. ouper þan haþ ben told here byforþ ¶ Hauē we nat graunted þan quod she þat good[c] folk ben blysfyl. and shrewes ben wrecches. ȝis quod I. [thanne quod she] ȝif þat any good were added to þe wrecchenesse of any wyȝt. nis he nat more blisful þan he þat ne haþ no medelyng of goode in hys solitarie wrecchednesse. so semeþ it quod I. and what seyst þou þan quod she of pilke wrecche þat lakkeþ alle goodes. so þat no goode nis medeled in hys wrecchednesse. and ȝitte ouer alle hys wickednesse for whiche he is a wrecche þat þer be ȝitte anoþer yuel anexid and knyȝt to hym. shal not men demen hym more vnsely þan pilke wrecche of whiche þe vnselynesse is re[le]ued by þe participacioun of som goode. whi sholde he nat

quod I. ¶ þan certys quod she han shrewes whan þei ben punissed somewhat of good anexid to hir wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne þe same peyne þat þei suffren whiche þat is good by þe resoun of Iustice. And whan pilke same shrewes ascapen wiþ outen tourment. þan han þei somewhat more of yuel ȝit ouer þe wickednesse þat þei han don. þat is to seye defaute of peyne. whiche defaute of peyne þou hast graunted is yuel. ¶ For þe desert of felonye I ne may nat denye it quod I. ¶ Moche more þan quod she ben shrewes vnsely whan þei ben wrongfully delyuered fro peyne. þan whan þei beþ punissed by ryȝtful vengeance. but þis is open þing and clere þat it is ryȝt þat shrewes ben punissed. and it is wickednesse and wrong þat þei escapin vnpunissed. ¶ who myȝt[e] denye \*þat quod I. but quod she may any man denye. þat al þat is ryȝt nis good. and also þe contrarie. þat alle þat is wrong nis

3599 ouper—oother

haþ—MS. haþe

ben—be

told—MS. tolde, C. told

3591 good[c]—goode

3592 [thanne—she]—from C.

3594 blisful—weleful

haþ—MS. haþe

3594-97 goods—good

3598 alle—al

whiche—whiche

3600 knyȝt—knytte

3601 re[le]ued—releued

3602 goode—good

3605 seyne—seyn

3606 whiche—whiche

3607 outen—owte

3609 don—MS. done

seye—seyn

3610 whiche—whiche

3611 desert—deserte

3614 beþ—MS. beþe, C. ben

3615 clere—cler

3617 myȝt[e]—myhte

3618 is ryȝt nis—MS. nis

ryȝt is

3619 alle—al

nis wicked—is wykke

wicked. certys quod I pise pinges ben clere ynouȝ, and  
 þat we han concludid a litel here byfornē. but I preye  
 þe þat þou telle me yif þou accordest to leten no tour-  
 ment to þe soules aftir þat þe body is dedid by þe deþe.  
 pis [is] to seyn. vndirstondest þou ouȝt þat soules han  
 any tourment after þe deþe of þe body. ¶ Certis quod  
 she ȝe and þat ryȝt greta. of whiche soules quod she I  
 trowe þat somme ben tourmentid by asprenesse of  
 peyne. and somme soules I trowe be excercised by a  
 purging mekenesse. but my conseil nys nat to deter-  
 myne of pis peyne. but I haue trauayled and told it  
 hider to. ¶ For þou sholdest knowe þat þe mowyng  
 [i. myght] of shrewes whiche mowyng þe semep to  
 ben. vnworþi nis no mowyng. and eke of shrewes of  
 whiche þou pleyndest þat þei ne were nat punissed.  
 þat þou woldest seen þat þei ne weren neuer mo wiþ  
 outen þe torment of hire wickednesse. and of þe licence  
 of mowyng to done yuel. þat þou preidest þat it  
 myȝt[e] sone ben endid. and þat þou woldest fayne  
 lerne. þat it ne sholde nat longe endure. and þat  
 shrewes ben more vnsely yif þei were of lenger duryng.  
 and most vnsely yif þei weren perdurable. and after  
 pis I haue shewed þe þat more vnsely ben shrewes  
 whan þei escapen wiþ oute ryȝtful peyne. þan whan þei  
 ben punissed by ryȝtful uengeaunce. and of pis sentence  
 folweþ it þat þan ben shrewes constreyned atte laste wiþ  
 most greuous tourment. whan men wene þat þei ne ben  
 nat ypunissed. whan I considre þi resouns quod I. I.  
 ne trowe nat þat men seyn any þing more verrelly. and  
 yif I tourne aȝeyn to þe studies of men. who is [he] to  
 whom it sholde seme þat [he] ne sholde nat only leuen  
 pise pinges. but eke gladly herkene hem. Certys quod

is good; and, on  
 the contrary,  
 whatsoever is un-  
 just is evil.

B. These are just  
 inferences from  
 our former pre-  
 mises. But is  
 there any punish-  
 ment for the soul  
 after death of the  
 body?

P. Yes, and great  
 ones too. Some  
 punishments are  
 rigorous and  
 eternal. Others  
 have a corrective  
 and purifying  
 force, and are of  
 finite duration.  
 But this is not  
 to our purpose.

I want you to see  
 that the power of  
 the wicked is in  
 reality nothing,  
 that the wicked  
 never go un-  
 punished; that  
 their licence to do  
 evil is not of long  
 duration, and  
 that the wicked  
 would be more  
 unhappy if it were  
 longer, and in-  
 finitely wretched  
 if it were to con-  
 tinue for ever.

After this I  
 showed that evil  
 men are more un-  
 happy, having  
 escaped punish-  
 ment, than if  
 justly chastised.  
 Wherefore when  
 they are supposed  
 to get off scot-free  
 they suffer most  
 grievously.

B. Your reason-  
 ing appears con-  
 vincing and con-  
 clusive. But your  
 arguments are  
 opposed to cur-  
 rent opinions,  
 and would hardly  
 command assent,  
 or even a hearing.

3621 here—her  
 3623 dedid—endyd  
 deþe—deth  
 3624 [is]—from C.  
 ouȝt—awht  
 3625 deþe—deth  
 3626 greta—gret  
 3628 be—ben

3629 determyne—determenye  
 3630 peyne—peynes  
 told—MS. tolde  
 3632 [i. myght]—from C.  
 3632-34 whiche—which  
 3633 eke—ek  
 3635 seen—seyn  
 3637 done—don

3638 myȝt[e]—myhte  
 fayne lerne—fayn lernen  
 3639 endure—dure  
 3645 atte—at the  
 laste—MS. past, C. laste  
 3647 resouns—resoun  
 3649-50 [he]—from C.  
 3651 eke—ek

*P.* It is so. For those accustomed to the darkness of error cannot fix their eyes on the light of perspicuous truth, like birds of night which are blinded by the full light of day. They consider only the gratification of their lusts, they think there is happiness in the liberty of doing evil and in exemption from punishment. Do you attend to the eternal law written in your own heart. Conform your mind to what is good, and you will stand in no need of a judge to confer a reward upon you—for you have it already in the enjoyment of the best of things (*i.e.* virtue). If you indulge in vice, you need no other

3668 chastisement—you have degraded yourself into a lower order of beings. The multitude doth not consider this. What then? Shall we take them as our models who resemble beasts? If a man who had lost his sight, having even forgotten his blindness, should declare that his faculties were all perfect, shall we weakly believe that those who retain their sight are blind? The vulgar will not assent to what I am going to say, though supported by conclusive arguments—to wit, that persons are more unhappy that do wrong

she so it is. but men may nat. for þei han hire eyen so wont to derkenesse of erþely þinges. þat þei may nat liften hem vp to þe lyzt of clere soþefastnes. ¶ But þei ben lyke to briddes of whiche þe nyzt lyztneþ hyre lookyng. and þe day blyndeþ hem. for whan men loken nat þe ordre of þinges but hire lustes and talentz. þei wene þat opir þe leue or þe mowyng to done wickednesse or ellys þe escaping wiþ oute peyne be weleful. but considere þe iugement of þe perdurable lawe. for if þou conferme þi corage to þe beste þinges. þou ne hast no nede to no iuge to ȝiuen þe pris or meede. for þou hast ioigned þi self to þe most excellent þing. and yif þou haue enclined þi studies to þe wicked þinges. ne seek no foreyn wrekere out of þi self. for þou þi self hast þrest þe in to wicked þinges. ryzt as þou myztest loken by dyuerse tymes þe foule erpe and þe heuene.

and þat alle oper þinges stynten fro wiþ oute. so þat þou [nere neyther in heuene ne in erthe] ne say[e] no þing more. þan sholde it semen to þe as by only resoun of lokyng. þat þou were in þe sterres. and now in þe erpe. but þe poeple ne lokeþ nat on þise þinges. what þan shal we þan approchen vs to hem þat I haue shewed þat þei ben lyke to þe bestes. (q. d. non) ¶ And what wilt þou seyne of þis ¶ yif þat a man hadde al forlorn hys syzt. and had[de] forȝeten þat he euer saw and wende þat no þing ne fayled[e] hym of perfeccioun of mankynde. now we þat myzten sen þe same þing wolde we nat wene þat he were blynde (q. d. sic). ne also ne accordeþ nat þe poeple to þat I shal seyne. þe whiche þing is susteyned by a stronge foundement of resouns. þat is to seyn þat more vnselely ben þei

3653 *derkenesse*—*derkenesse*  
3664 *clere soþefastnes*—*cleer sothfastnesse*  
3656 *whiche*—*which*  
3669 *opir*—*eyther*  
*done*—*don*  
3660 *escaping*—*schapyng*  
3662 *to* (1)—*of*  
3665 *foreyn*—*foreyne*  
3666 *þrest*—*thyrst*

3666 *wicked*—*wikke*  
3666 [*nere*—*erthe*]—*from C.*  
*heuene*—*C. heuene*  
*say[e]*—*C. saye*  
3672 *on*—*in*  
3674 *lyke*—*lyk*  
*q. d.*—*MS. quod*  
3675 *wilt þou seyne*—*woltow seyn*  
3676 *forlorn*—*MS. forlorne,*

*C. for-lorn*  
*syzt*—*syhte*  
*had[de]*—*hadde*  
3677 *saw*—*MS. sawe, C. sawh*  
*fayled[e]*—*faylede*  
3678 *sen*—*MS. sene, C. sen*  
3679 *þing*—*things*  
*q. d.*—*MS. quod*  
3681 *whiche*—*which*

pat don wrong to oper folk. þen þei pat þe wrong  
suffren. ¶ I wolde heren þilke \*same resouns quod I  
¶ Deniest þou quod she pat alle shrewes ne ben worpi  
to han tourment. nay quod I. but quod she I am cer-  
teyne by many resouns pat shrewes ben vnsely. it ac-  
cordeþ quod I. þan [ne] dowtest þou nat quod she pat  
þilke folk pat ben worpi of tourment pat þei ne ben  
wrecches. It accordeþ wel quod I. yif þou were þan  
quod she yset a luge or a knower of þinges. wheþer  
trowest þou þat men sholde tourment[e] hym þat haþ  
don þe wronge. or hym þat haþ suffred þe wronge. I  
ne doute nat quod I. þat I nolde don suffissaunt satis-  
faccioun to hym þat had[de] suffred þe wrong by þe  
sorwe of hym þat had[de] don þe wronge. ¶ þan  
semeþ it quod she pat þe doar of wrong is more wrecche  
þan he þat haþ suffred þe wrong. þat folweþ wel quod  
[I]. þan quod she by pise causes and by oper causes  
þat ben enforced by þe same roate þat filþe or synne by  
þe propre nature of it makeþ men wrecches. and it  
sheweþ wel þat þe wrong þat men don nis nat þe  
wrecchenesse of hym þat receyueþ þe wrong. but þe  
wrecchednesse of hym þat doþ þe wronge ¶ but certys  
quod she pise oratours or aduocatȝ don al þe contrarie  
for þei enforcen hem to commoeue þe iuges to han pite  
of hem þat han suffred and resceyued þe þinges þat ben  
greuous and aspre. and zitte men sholden more ryȝt-  
fully han pitee on hem þat don þe greuaunces and þe  
wronges. þe whiche shrewes it were a more couenable  
þing þat þe accusours or aduocatȝ not wrope but pitous  
and debonaire ladden þe shrewes þat han don wrong to  
þe Iugement. ryȝt as men leden seke folk to þe leche.  
for þat þei sholden seken out þe maladies of synne by

than those who  
suffer wrong.

[\* fol. 29.]

B. I would will-  
ingly hear your  
reasons.

P. Do you deny  
that every wicked  
man deserves  
punishment?

B. No, I do not.

P. I am satisfied  
that impious men  
are in many ways  
miserable.

B. They are so.

P. Then those  
that deserve  
punishment are  
miserable.

B. I admit it.

P. If you were a  
judge, upon whom  
would you inflict  
punishment?

upon the wrong-  
doer, or upon the  
injured?

B. I should not  
hesitate to punish  
the offender as a  
satisfaction to the  
sufferer.

P. Then you  
would deem the  
injuring person  
more unhappy  
than he who had  
been wronged?

B. That follows  
naturally.

P. From this  
then, and other  
reasons of like  
nature, it seems

3703

that vice makes  
men miserable,  
and an injury  
done to any man  
is the misery of  
the doer, and not  
of the sufferer.

But our advocates  
think different-  
ly—they try to ob-  
tain pity for those  
that have suffered  
cruelty and op-  
pression; but the  
juster pity is  
really due to the  
oppressors, who  
ought, therefore,  
to be led to judg-  
ment as the sick  
are to the phys-  
ician, not by  
angry but by  
merciful and kind  
accusers, so that,

3683 don—MS. done, C. don

oper—oother

3688 [ne]—from C.

3691 yset—MS. ysette, C.

yset

wheþer—omitted

3692 tourment[e]—torment-

3692-3 haþ—MS. haþe [en]

3693 wronge (2)—wrong

3695 had[de]—hadde

3696 had[de]—hadden

wronge—wrong

3697 doar—doere

3698 haþ—MS. haþe

3699 [I]—from C.

3700 ben—ben of

3700 roate—Roote

3703-4 but—wronge—omit-

ted

3704 doþ—MS. doþe

3711 wroþe—wroth

3712 þe—tho

don—MS. done, C. don

3713 seke—syke

by the phisic of chastisement, they may be cured of their vices. I would not have the guilty defrauded by their advocates. Their duty is to accuse, and not to excuse offenders. Were

3720

it permitted the wicked to get a slight view of virtue's beauty, which they have forsaken, and could they be persuaded of the purifying effects of lawful chastisement, they surely would not consider punishment as an evil, but

3727

would willingly give themselves up to justice and refuse the defence of their advocates. The wise hate nobody, only a fool hates good men; and it is as irrational to hate the wicked. Vice is a sickness of the soul, and needs our com-

3734

passion, and not our hate, for the distempers of the soul are more deplorable than those of the body, and have more claims upon our compassion.

3740

[The ferthe Metur.]  
What frenzy causes man to have on his fate, that is, by war or by strife. If death is desired he de-

tourmentz. and by pis couenaunt eyþer þe entent of þe defendours or aduocat; sholde fayle *and* cesen in al. or ellys yif þe office of aduocat; wolde bettre profiten to men. it sholde be *tourned* in to þe habit of accusacioun. þat is [to] s[e]yn þei sholden accuse shrewes. *and* nat excuse hem. *and* eke þe shrewes hem self. ȝit it were leueful to hem to seen at any clifte þe vertue þat þei han forleten. *and* sawen þat þei sholde putten adoun þe filþes of hire vices by [the] *tourmentz* of peynes. þei ne auzten nat ryȝt for þe recompensacioun forto geten hem bounte *and* prowesse whiche þat þei han lost demen ne holden þat pilke peynes weren *tourmentes* to hem. *and* eke þei wolden refuse þe attendaunce of hir aduocat; *and* taken hem self to hire iuges *and* to hir accusours. for whiche it bytided [þat] as to þe wise folk þer nis no place ylete to hate. þat is to seyn. þat hate ne haþ no place amonges wise men. ¶ For no wyȝt wolde haten gode men. but yif he were ouer moche a fole. ¶ *and* forto haten shrewes it nis no resoun. ¶ For ryȝt so as languissing is maladie of body. ryȝt so ben vices *and* synne maladies of corage. ¶ *and* so as we ne deme nat þat þei þat ben seek of hire body ben worpi to ben hated. but raper worpi of pite. wel more worpi nat to ben hated. but forto ben had in pite ben þei of whiche þe pouȝtes ben constrained by felonous wickednesse. þat is more cruel þan any languissinge of body.

## QUID TANTOS IUUAT.

What delited it ȝow to exciten so grete moewynges of hatredes *and* to hasten *and* bisien [the] fatal disposicioun of ȝoure deep wiþ ȝoure propre handes. þat is to seyn by batailles or [by] contek. for yif ȝe axen þe

3715 *tourmentz*—torment  
þe (2)—omitted  
3719 [to] s[e]yn—to seyn  
3722 *sawen*—saw  
sholde—sholden  
3723 [the]—from C.  
3724 *auzten*—owhte

3725-29 *whiche*—which  
3729 *bytided*—MS. byndep,  
C. bytidith  
[þat]—from C.  
3730 *ylete*—I-leten  
3731 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
3732 *wolde*—nyl

3732 *moche*—mochel  
3733 *fole*—fool  
3736 *seek*—syke  
3743 [the]—from C.  
3745 [by]—from C.

deeph it hastisip hym of hys owen wille. ne deep ne  
tarief nat hys swifte hors. and [the] men þat þe ser-  
pent; and þe lyouns. and þe tigre. and þe beere and þe  
boore seken to sleen wiþ her teþe. zit þilke same men  
seken to sleen eueryche of hem oþer wiþ swerde. loo for  
her maners ben \* diuerse and discordaunt ¶ þei  
moeuen vnryztful oostes and cruel batailes. and wilne  
to perisse by enterchaungynge of dartes. but þe resoun  
of cruelte nis nat ynouȝ ryztful. wilt þou þan zelden a  
couenable gerdoun to þe desertes of men ¶ Loue ryzt-  
fully goode folk: and haue pite on shrewes. 3756

## HINC EGO UIDEO INQUAM. ET CETERA.

þus see I wel quod I. eyþer what blisfulnesse or ellys  
what vnselesnesse is establiissed in þe desertys of  
goode men and of shrewes. ¶ but in þis ilke fortune  
of poeple I see somewhat of goode. and somewhat of  
yuel. for no wise man hap nat leuer ben exiled pore  
and nedy and nameles. þan forto dwellen in hys Citee  
and flouren of rychesses. and be redoutable by honoure.  
and stronge of power for in þis wise more clerely and  
more witnesfully is þe office of wise men ytretid whan  
þe blisfulnes and [the] pouste of gouernours is as it  
were yshad amonges poeples þat ben neyȝboures and  
subgitȝ. syn þat namely prisoun lawe and pise oþer  
tourmentȝ of lawful peynes ben rapȝer owed to felonous  
Citezeins. for þe whiche felonous Citezeins þo peynes  
ben establissed. þan for goode folk. ¶ þan I merueile  
me gretly quod I. whi [þat] þe pinges ben so mys en-  
trechaunged. þat tourmentȝ of felounes pressen and  
confounden goode folk. and shrewes rauyssen medes of

lays not to come.  
Why do they who  
are exposed to the  
assaults of beasts  
of prey and  
venomous reptiles  
seek to slay each  
other with the  
sword. Lo! their  
manners and  
opinions do not  
accord, wherefore  
they engage in  
unjust wars, and  
fiercely urge on  
each other's des-  
tiny. But this is  
no just reason for  
shedding blood.  
Wouldst thou re-  
ward each as he  
deserves? Then  
love the good as  
they deserve, and  
have pity upon  
the wicked.

[The fyfthe prose.]

B. I see plainly  
the nature of that  
felicity which at-  
tends the virtues  
of the good, and of  
the misery that  
follows the vices of  
the wicked. But  
in Fortune I see a  
mixture of good  
and evil. The  
wise man prefers  
riches, &c., to

poverty, &c. And  
wisdom appears  
more illustrious,  
when wise men  
are governors and  
impart their  
felicity to their  
subjects; and  
when imprison-  
ment, torture, &c.,  
are inflicted only  
upon bad citizens.

3770

Why, then,  
should things  
undergo so un-  
natural a change?

Why should the  
worthy suffer and  
the vicious re-

3746 *hastisip*—*hasteth*  
3747 *owen wille*—*owne wyl*  
3747 *[the]*—from C.  
3749 *boore*—*boor*  
3749 *teþe*—*teth*  
3750 *suerde*—*sword*  
3751 *her*—*hir*  
3752 *wilne*—*wynlen*  
3753 *enterchaungynge*—*en-*

*trechaungynge*  
3760 *goode*—*good*  
3761 *hap*—MS. *hape*  
*nat*—omitted  
*leuer*—*leuere*  
3763 *þan*—MS. *þat*, C. *than*  
3763 *redoutable*—MS. *re-*  
*dentable*, C. *redowtable*  
3764 *stronge*—*strong*

3764 *clerely*—*clerly*  
3768 *[the]*—from C.  
3767 *neyȝboures*—*nesshe-*  
*bors*  
3769 *lawful*—*laweful*  
3771 *goode*—*good*  
3772 *[þat]*—from C.



celve the reward of virtue? I should like to hear the reason of so unjust a distribution. I should not marvel so much if *Chance* were the cause of all this confusion. But I am overwhelmed with astonishment when I reflect, that God the director of all things thus unequally distributes rewards and punishments. What difference is there, then, unless we know the cause, between God's proceedings and the operations of Chance? P. It is not at all surprising that you think you see irregularities, when you are ignorant of that order by which God proceeds. But, forasmuch as God, the good governor, presides over all, rest assured that all things are done rightly and as they ought to be done.

[\* MS. arituri]

[The fyfthe Metur.]

He who knows not that the Bear is seen near the Pole, nor has observed the path of Boötes, will marvel at their appearance.

The vulgar are alarmed when shadows terrestrial obscure the moon's brightness, causing the stars to be displayed.

3775 *grete*—gret  
3776 *to witen*—forto weten  
3778 *trowed[e]*—trowede  
3779 *were*—weeren  
3780 *myne*—myn  
3781 *good[e]*—goode  
3782 *yuel*—yuelis  
3783 *hardnesse*—hardnesses

vertue *and* ben in honours. *and* in grete estatiss. *and* I desire eke to witen of þe. what semep þe to ben þe resoun of þis so wrongful a confusioun ¶ For I wolde wondre wel þe lasse yif I trowed[e] þat alle þise þinges were medeled by fortuouse hap. ¶ But now heþep *and* encreseþ myne astonyenge god governour of þinges. þat so as god ȝeueþ ofte tymes to good[e] men goodes *and* myrþes. *and* to shrewes yuel *and* aspre þinges. *and* ȝeueþ aȝeynewarde to goode folk hardnesse. *and* to shrewes [he] graunteþ hem her wille *and* þat þei desiren. what difference þan may þe be bitwixen þat þat god dop. *and* þe hap of fortune. yif men ne knowe nat þe cause whi þat [it] is. it nis no merueille quod she pouȝ þat men wenen þat þe be somewhat folysche *and* confus whan þe resoun of þe order is vnknowe. ¶ But alle pouȝ þe ne know nat þe cause of so gret a disposicioun. napeles for as moche as god þe good[e] governour attempreþ *and* gouerneþ þe world. ne doute þe nat þat alle þinges ne ben doon aryȝt. 3793

SI QUIS ARCTURI \* SYDERA.

Who so þat ne knowe nat þe sterres of arctour ytourned neye to þe souereyne contre or point. þat is to seyne ytourned neye to þe souereyne pool of þe firmament *and* woot nat whi þe sterre boetes passeþ or 3798 gaderiþ his wey[n]es. *and* drenceþ his late flaumbes in þe see. *and* whi þat boetes þe sterre vnfoldiþ his ouer swifte arisynges. þan shal he wondren of þe lawe of þe heye eyre. *and* eke if þat he ne knowe nat why þat þe hornes of þe ful[le] moene waxen pale *and* infect by þe boundes of þe derke nyȝt ¶ *and* how þe moene dirk

3784 [he]—from C.  
3785 *wille*—wyl  
3788 *difference*—MS. differ  
3789 *dop*—MS. doþe [ence]  
3790 *hap*—happe  
3797 [it]—from C.  
3798 *ne*—ne it  
3799 *confus*—confuse  
3799 *alle*—al  
3791 *good[e]*—goode

3793 *ne*—omitted  
3794 *arctour*—MS. aritour  
3795 *neye*—neygh  
3796 *seyne*—scyn  
3797 *nygh*  
3797-99 *boetes*—MS. boeces,  
C. boetes  
3798 *his* (1)—hise  
3799 *wey[n]es*—weynes  
3802 *ful[le]*—fulle

and confuse discouereþ þe sterres. þat she had[de] ycouered by hir clere visage. þe commune errour moeueþ folk and makip wery hir bacines of bras by pikke strookes. þat is to seyne þat þer is a maner poeple þat hyzt[e] coribandes þat wenen þat whan þe moone is in þe eclips þat it be enchauntid. and þefore forto rescowe þe moone þei betyn hire basines wiþ pikke strokes. ¶ Ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe blastes of þe wynde chorus betyn þe strondes of þe see by quakyng floodes. ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe weyhte of þe snowe yhardid by þe colde. is resolued by þe brennyng hete of phebus þe sonne. ¶ For here seen men redyly þe causes. but þe \* causes yhid þat is to seye in heuene trouble þe brestes of men. ¶ þe moeueable poeple is a-stoned of alle þinges þat comen selde and sodeynely in oure age. but yif þe troubylly error of oure ignorance departid[e] from vs. so þat we wisten þe causes whi þat swiche þinges bitiden. certys þei sholden cesse to seme wondres.

Thinking the eclipse the result of enchantment, they sought to destroy the charms by the tinkling of brazen vessels or cymbals. Yet none marvel when the north-west wind renders the sea tempestuous; nor when vast heaps of congealed snow are melted by the warm rays of the sun, because the causes are apparent.

3813

Things whose causes are unknown disquiet the human mind.

[\* fol. 30.]

The fickle mob stands amazed at every rare or sudden phenomenon. Fear and wonder, however, soon cease when ignorance gives place to certain knowledge.

3822

## ITA EST INQUAM.

þvs is it quod I. but so as þou hast zeuen or byhyzt me to vnwrappen þe hidde causes of þinges ¶ and to discoueren me þe resouns couered with dirknesses I preye þe þat þou diuise and Iuge me of þis matere. and þat þou do me to vndrestonden it. ¶ For þis miracle or þis wondre troubleþ me ryzt gretely. and þan she a litel [what] smylyng seide. ¶ þou clepest me quod she to telle þing. þat is grettest of alle þinges þat mowen ben axed. ¶ And to þe whiche questioun vnneþ[e]s is þere auzt ynow to lauen it. as who seiþ. vnneþes is þer suffisauntly any þing to answey perfytly to þi questioun.

[The sixte prose.]  
B. So it is. But as thou hast promised to unfold the hidden causes of things, and unveil things wrapt up in darkness; I pray thee deliver me from my present perplexity, and explain the mystery I mentioned to you. P. You ask me to declare to you the most intricate of all questions, which I am afraid can scarce be answered.

3833

3904 had[de]—hadde  
3906 bacines—MS. batines  
pikke—MS. pilke, C. thilke  
3907 seyne—seyn  
3908 hyzt[e]—hihte  
3909 eclips—eclipse  
3812 chorus—MS. thorus, C.  
chorus  
3813 snowe—sonwh=snowh

3815 here—her  
redyly—redely  
3816 yhid—MS. yhidde, C.  
I-hid  
seye—seyn  
3817 trouble—trowblen  
3820 departid[e] from—de-  
partede fro  
3823 byhyzt—by-hyhte

3824 hidde—hyd  
3826 preye—preey  
diuise—deuyse  
3827 do—don  
3828 gretely—gretly  
3829 [what]—from C.  
3832 þere auzt—ther awht

For the subject is of such a kind, that when one doubt is removed, innumerable others, like the heads of the hydra, spring up. Nor would there be any end of them unless they were restrained by a quick and vigorous effort of the mind. The question whereof you want a solution embraces the five following points: 1. Simplicity, or unity of Providence. 2. The order and course of Destiny. 3. Sudden chance. 4. Prescience of God, and divine predestination. 5. Free-will. I will try to treat of these things:—  
[Resuming her discourse as from a new principle,

3849

Philosophy argued as follows:—  
The generation of all things, every progression of things liable to change, and everything that moveth, derive their causes, order, and form from the immutability of the divine understanding. Providence directs all things by a variety of means. These means, referred only to the divine intelligence, are called Providence; but when contemplated in relation to the things which receive motion and order from them, are called Destiny. Reflection on the efficacy of the one and the other will soon

¶ For þe matere of it is swiche þat whan oon doute is determined *and* kut away þer wexen oþer doutes wiþouten noumbre. ryȝt as þe heuedes waxen of ydre þe serpent þat hercules slouȝ. ¶ Ne þere ne were no manere ne noon ende. but yif þat a wyȝt constrained[e] þo doutes. by a ryȝt lyuely *and* a quik fire of þouȝt. þat is to seyn by vigour *and* strengþe of witte. ¶ For in þis matere men weren wont to maken questionns of þe simplicitie of þe purueaunce of god *and* of þe ordre of destine. *and* of sodeyne hap. *and* of þe knowyng *and* predestinacioun deuine *and* of þe lyberte of fre wille: þe whiche þing þou þi self aperceiust wel of what weyȝt þei ben. but for as mochel as þe knowynge of þise þinges is a manere porcioun to þe medicine to þe. al be it so þat I haue lytel tyme to don it. ȝit napeles I wole enforcen me to shewe somewhat of it. ¶ but al þouȝ þe norissinges of dite of musike deliteþ þe þow most suffren. *and* forberen a litel of þilke delite while þat I weue (contexto) to þe resouns yknyt by ordre ¶ As it likeþ to þe quod I so do. ¶ þo spak she ryȝt a[s] by an oþer bygygnyn[ge] *and* seide þus. ¶ þe engendrynge of alle þinges quod she *and* alle þe progressiouns of muuable nature. *and* alle þat moeueþ in any manere takip hys causes. hys ordre. *and* hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe deuyne þouȝt [*and* thilke deuyne thowht] þat is yset *and* put in þe toure. þat is to seyne in þe heyȝt of þe simplicitie of god. stablisip many manere gyses to þinges þat ben to don. ¶ þe whiche manere whan þat men loken it in þilke pure clerenesse of þe deuyne intelligence. it is ycleped purueaunce ¶ but whan þilke manere is re-

3834 *swiche*—swych

oon—o

3835 *wiþouten noumbre* —  
with-owte nowmbyr3836 *waxen*—wexen3837 *þere*—þer3838 *constrained[e]* — con-  
streynede3839 *lyuely*—lyfly3840 *witte*—wit3843 *hap*—happe3845 *weyȝt*—wyht3848 *wole*—wol3850 *þow*—MS. now, C. þou  
most *suffren*—MS. moste  
to souereyne; C. most  
suffren3851 *þilke*—thilke3853 *þo*—so*spak*—MS. spake, C. spak3853 *a[s]*—as3856 *alle*—al3858 [*and*—*thowht*]—from

C.

*yset*—MS. ysette, C. yset3859 *toure*—towr*seyne*—seyu*heyȝt*—heyhte3861 *don*—done3863 *clerenesse*—klenness

ferred by men to pinges þat it moeueþ *and* disponeþ þan of olde men. it was cleped destine. ¶ þe whiche pinges yif þat any wyzt lokeþ wel in his þouzt. þe strengþe of þat oon *and* of þat oþer he shal lyztly mowen seen þat þise two pinges ben diuers. ¶ For *purueaunce* is pilke deuyne resoun þat is establissed in þe souereyne prince of pinges. þe whiche *purueaunce* disponiþ alle pinges. but destine is þe disposicioun *and* ordenaunce cleuyng to moeuable pinges. by þe whiche disposicioun þe *purueaunce* knyteþ alle pinges in hire ordres. ¶ For *purueaunce* enbraceþ alle pinges to hepe. al þou; þat þei ben dyuerse *and* al þou; þei ben wiþ outhen fyn. but destynie departeþ *and* ordeyneþ alle pinges singlerly *and* diuideþ. in moeuynges. in places. in formes. in tymes. departiþ [as] þus. so þat þe vnfolding of temporel ordenaunce assembled *and* ooned in þe loking of þe deuyne þouzt ¶ Is *purueaunce* *and* pilke same assemblynge. *and* oonyng diuided *and* vnfolden by tymes. lat þat ben called destine. *and* al be \*it so þat þise pinges ben dyuerse. 3itte napeles hangeþ þat oon on þat oþer. forwhi þe ordre destinal procediþ of þe simplicitie of *purueaunce*. for ryzt as a werkman þat aperceiueþ in hys þouzt þe forme of þe þing þat he wil make moeueþ þe effect of þe werke. *and* lediþ þat he had[de] loket byforne in hys þouzt symply *and* presently by temporel þouzt. ¶ Certys ryzt so god disponiþ in hys *purueaunce* singlerly *and* stably þe pinges þat ben to done. but he amynistreþ in many maneres *and* in dyuerse tymes by destyne. pilke same pinges þat he haþ disponed þan wheþir þat destine be excercised. eyþer by somme dyuyne spirites seruaunte; to þe deuyne *purueaunce*. or ellys by somme soule (*anima*

cause us to see their differences. Providence is the divine intelligence manifested in the disposition of worldly affairs. Destiny or Fate is that inherent state or condition of movable things by means whereof Providence retains them in the order in which she has placed them. Providence embraces all things, although diverse and infinite; but Fate gives motion to every individual thing, and in the place and under the form appropriated to it. So that the explication of this order of things wrapt up in the divine intelligence is Providence; and being unfolded according to time and other circum-

3880

stances, may be called Fate. Though these [\* fol. 30 b.] things appear to differ, yet one of them depends on the other, for the order of Fate proceeds from the unity of Providence. For as a workman, who has formed in his head the plan of a work which he is desirous to finish, executes it afterwards, and produces after a time all the different parts of the model which he has conceived; so God in the plan of his Providence disposes everything to be brought about in a certain order and in a proper time; and afterwards, by the ministry of Fate,

3873 *cleuyng*—*cluyng*  
3875 *wiþ outhen fyn*—*Infynyte*  
3876 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*  
3877 in (3)—*MS. and, C. in*  
3878 *departiþ*—*omitted*  
[as]—*from C.*

3878 *so þat*—*lat*  
3884 *on*—*of*  
3888 *wil*—*wol*  
3888 *had[de]*—*hadde*  
*symply*—*symplely*  
3888 *þouzt*—*ordinaunce*  
3890 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*

3890 *stably*—*stablye*  
3893 *hab*—*MS. hape*  
3894 *eyþer*—*owther*  
*seruaunte; — MS. seru-*  
*auunce;*  
3895 *somme*—*som*

he accomplishes what he has planned, conformably to that order and that time. So then, however Fate be exercised, it is evident that things subject to Destiny are under the control of Providence, which disposes Destiny. But some things under Providence are exempt from the control of Fate; being stably fixed near to the Divinity himself, and beyond the movement of Destiny. Foreven, as among several circles revolving round one common centre, that which is innermost approaches nearest to the simplicity of the middle points, and is, as it were, a centre, round which the outward ones revolve; whilst the

3912 outermost, revolving in a wider circumference, the further it is from the centre describes a larger space—but yet, if this circle or anything else be joined to the middle point, it is constrained to be immovable. By parity of reason, the further anything is removed from the first Intelligence, so much the more is it under the control of Destiny; and the nearer anything approaches to this Intelligence, the centre of all things, the more stable it becomes, and the less dependent upon Destiny.

mundi). or ellys by al nature scruyng to god. or ellys by þe celestial moeuynge of sterres. or ellys by þe vertue of aungels. or ellys by þe dyuerse subtilite of deuces. or ellys by any of hem. or ellys by hem alle þe destynal ordynaunce is ywouen or accomplisshed. certys it is open þing þat þe purueaunce is an vnmoeueable and symple forme of þinges to done. and þe moeueable bonde and þe temporel ordynaunce of þinges whiche þat þe deuyne simplicitie of purueaunce haþ ordeyned to done. þat is destine. For whiche it is þat alle þinges þat ben put vndir destine ben certys subgit; to purueaunce. to whiche purueaunce destine it self is subgit and vndir.

¶ But somme þinges ben put vndir purueaunce þat sourmounten þe ordinaunce of destine. and þo ben pilke þat stably ben yficched ney to þe first godhed þei sourmounten þe ordre of destinal moeuablite. ¶ For ryzt as cercles þat tournen aboute a same Centre or about a poynt. pilke cercle þat is inrest or moost wiþynne ioineþ to þe symplesse of þe myddel and is as it were a Centre or a poynt to þat oper cercles þat tournen abouten hym. ¶ and pilke þat is outerest compased by larger envyronnyng is vnfolden by larger spaces in so mochel as it is forpest fro þe mydel symplicitie of þe poynt. and yif þer be any þing þat knytteþ and felawshippeþ hym selfe to pilke mydel poynt it is constreyned in to symplicitie. þat is to seyn in to [vn]moeueablete. and it ceseth to ben shad and to fletin dyuersly. ¶ Ryzt so by semblable resoun. pilke þinge þat departiþ firpest fro þe first þouzt of god. it is vnfolden and summittid to grettere bondes of destine. and in so moche is þe þing more free and lovs fro destyne as it axeþ and

3906 *al*—alle  
3907 *moeuynge*—moeuynge  
3900 *ywouen*—MS. ywonnen,  
C. ywouen  
or—and  
3902 *bonde*—bond  
3904 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
3905 *whiche*—which

3912 *as*—as of  
3913 *about*—a-bowte  
inrest—innerest  
3917 *larger* (1)—a large  
3918 *mochel*—moche  
forpest—ferthre  
3920 *selfe*—self  
3921 [vn]moeueablete — vn-

moeuuhlete  
3922 *ceseth* — MS. fleþe, C.  
cesith  
3923 *þinge*—thing  
3924 *of*—MS. to, C. of  
3926 *lovs*—laus

holdeþ hym ner to pilke Centre of pinges. þat is to seyne god. ¶ and if þe ping cleueþ to þe stedfastnesse of þe pouzt of god. and be wiþ oute moeuynge certys it sourmounteþ þe necessite of destyne. þan ryzt swiche comparisoun as [it] is of skilynge to vndirstondyng and of ping þat is engendred to ping þat is. and of tyme to eternite. and of þe cercle to þe Centre. ryzt so is þe ordre of moeueable destine to þe stable symplicitie of purueaunce. ¶ pilke ordinaunce moeueþ þe heuene and þe sterres and attempreþ þe elymentz to gider amonges hem self. and transformeþ hem by enterchaungable mutacioun. ¶ and pilke same ordre neweþ azein alle pinges growyng and fallyng a-doune by sembleables progressiouns of seedes and of sexes. þat is to sein. male and female. and þis ilke ordre constreyneth þe fortunes and þe dedes of men by a bonde of causes nat able to ben vnbounden (indissolubili). þe whiche destinal causes whanne þei passen oute fro þe bygynnynges of þe vnmoeueable purueaunce it mot nedes be þat þei ne be nat mutable. and þus ben þe pinges ful wel ygouerned. yif þat þe symplicitie dwellynge\* in þe deuyne pouzt sheweþ furþe þe ordre of causes. vnable to be I-bowed. and þis ordre constreyneth by hys propre stablete þe moeueable pinges. or ellys þei sholde fleten folily for whiche it is þat alle pinges semen to be confus and trouble to vs men. for we ne mowe nat considere pilke ordinaunce. ¶ Napeles þe propre manere of euery ping dressyng hem to goode disponit hem alle. for þere nis no ping don for cause of yuel. ne pilke ping þat is don by wicked[e] folk nis nat don for yuel þe whiche shrewes as I haue shewed [ful] plentiously

And if we suppose that the thing in question is joined to the stability of the supreme mind, it then becomes immovable, and is beyond the necessity and power of destiny. As reasoning is to the understanding, as that which is produced to that which exists of itself, as time to eternity, as the circle to the centre, so is the movable order of Fate to the stable simplicity of Providence. Destiny rules nature. It controls the actions of men by an indissoluble chain of causes, and is, like their

3941 origin, immutable. Thus then, are all things well conducted, since that invariable order of cause has its origin in the simplicity of the Divine mind, and by its inherent immutability ex-

[\* fol. 31.]

ercises a restraint upon mutable things, and preserves them from irregularity. To those who understand not this order, things appear confused—nevertheless, the proper condition of all things directs and inclines it to their true good. For there is nothing done for the sake of evil, not even by the wicked, who, in seeking for felicity, are led astray by crooked error.

3927 *ner*—*ner*  
3928 *seyne*—*seyn*  
    *pinge cleueþ* — thing  
    *elyueth*  
    *stedfastnesse* — *stydefast-*  
    *nesse*  
3930 *swiche*—*swych*  
3931 [*it*]—from C.  
3932 to (2)—MS. of, C. to

3937 *enterchaungable*—MS.  
    *enterchaungyngable*, C.  
    *entrechaungeable*  
3939 *a-doune*—*a-down*  
    *sembleables*—*semblable*  
3942 *bonde*—*bond*  
3943 *ben vnbounden*—*be vn-*  
    *bownde*  
3944 *oute*—*owt*

3948 *furþe*—*forth*  
3949 *I-bowed*—MS. *vnbound-*  
    *en*, C. *I-bowed*  
3950 *sholde*—*sholden*  
3951 *whiche*—*which*  
3952 *mowe*—*mowen*  
3956 *wicked[e]*—*wykkede*  
3957 [*ful*]—from C.

But the order proceeding from the centre of supreme goodness does not mislead any. But you may say, what greater confusion can there be than that both prosperous and adverse things should at times happen to good men, and that evil men should at one time enjoy their desires and at another be tormented by hateful things. Are men wise enough to discover, whether those whom they believe to be virtuous or wicked, are so in reality? Opinions differ as to this matter. Some who are deemed worthy of reward by one person, are deemed unworthy by another. But, suppose it were possible for one to distinguish

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with certainty between the good and the bad? Then he must have as accurate a knowledge of the mind as one has of the body. It is miraculous to him who knows it not, why sweet things are agreeable to some bodies, and bitter to others; why some sick persons are relieved by lenitives and others by sharper remedies. It is no marvel to the leech, who knows the causes of disease, and their cures. What constitutes the health of the mind, but goodness? And what are its maladies, but vice? Who is the preserver of good,

seken goode. but wicked errour mystournip hem. ¶ Ne þe ordre comynge fro þe poynt of souereyne goode ne declineþ nat fro hys bygynnyng. but þou mayst sein what vnreste may ben a wors confusioun þan þat goode men han somme tyme aduersite. *and* somtyme prosperite. ¶ and shrewes also han now þinges þat þei desiren. *and* now þinges þat þei haten ¶ wheþer men lyuen now in swiche hoolnesse of þouȝt. as who seiþ. ben men now so wise. þat swiche folk as þei demen to ben goode folk or shrewes þat it mot nedes ben þat folk ben swiche as þei wenen. but in þis manere þe domes of men discorden. þat pilke men þat somme folk demen worpi of mede. oþer folk demen hem worpi of *tourment*. but lat vs graunt[e] I pose þat som man may wel demen or knowen þe goode folk *and* þe badde. May he þan knowen *and* seen pilke inrest attemperaunce of corages. as it haþ ben wont to be said of bodyes. as who seiþ may a man speken *and* determine of attemperaunce in corages. as men were wont to demen or speken of complexiouns *and* attemperaunces of bodies (q' non). ne it [ne] is nat an vnlyke miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. ¶ As who seiþ. but is lyke a merueil or a miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. whi þat swete þinges [ben] couenable to some bodies þat ben hool *and* to some bodies bittre þinges ben couenable. *and* also whi þat some seke folk ben holpen with lyȝt medicines [*and* some folk ben holpen with sharppe medicynes] but napeles þe leche þat knoweþ þe manere *and* þe attemperaunce of heele *and* of maladie ne merueileþ of it no þing. but what oþer þing semeþ hele of corages but bounte *and* prowessse. *and* what oþer þing semeþ maladie of corages but vices. who is ellys kepere of good or

3958-9 *goode*—good3960 *declineth*—MS. *enclineþ*,C. *declinyth*3961 *wors*—worse3962 *somme tyme*—somytyme3965 *swiche*—swych3967 *goode*—good3967 *mot*—moste3971 *graunt[e]*—graunte3973 *inrest*—Inneryste3974 *hab*—MS. *habe**said*—MS. *saide*, C. *seyd*3975 *determine*—determinen

3978 [ne]—from C.

3978 *vnlyke*—vn-lyk3979 *lyke*—lik

3981 [ben]—from C.

*hool*—hoole3984 [*and*—*medicynes*]—from C.



dryuere away of yuel but god *gouvernour and* leecher of  
 þouȝtes. þe whiche god whan he haþ by-holden from þe  
 heye toure of hys *purueaunce* he knoweþ what is  
 couenable to euery wyȝt. *and* lenep hem þat he wot  
 [þat] is couenable to hem. Loo here of comeþ *and*  
 here of is don þis noble miracle of þe ordre *destinal*.  
 whan god þat alle knoweþ doþ swiche þing. of whiche  
 þing [þat] vnknowyng folk ben astoned but forto con-  
 streine as who seiþ ¶ But forto *comprehende and* telle  
 a fewe þinges of þe deuyne depnesse þe whiche þat *mans*  
 resoun may vnderstonde. ¶ þilk man þat þou wenest  
 to ben ryȝt Iuste *and* ryȝt kepyng of equite. þe contrarie  
 of þat semeþ to þe deuyne *purueaunce* þat al woot.  
 ¶ And lucan my familer telleþ þat þe victories cause  
 liked[e] to þe goddes *and* causes ouercomen liked[e] to  
 catoun. þan what so euer þou mayst seen þat is don in  
 þis [world] vn hoped or vnwened. certys it is þe ryȝt[e]  
 ordre of þinges. but as to þi wicked[e] oppinioun it is a  
 confusioun. but I suppose þat som man be so wel yþewed.  
 þat þe deuyne Iugement *and* þe Iugement of mankynde  
 accorden hem to gidre of hym. but he is so vnstedfast  
 of corage [þat] yif any aduersite come to hym he wolde  
 for-leten perauenture to continue iznocence by þe  
 whiche he ne may nat wiþholden fortune. ¶ þan þe  
 wise dispensacioun of god spareþ hym þe whiche  
 manere aduersite \* myȝt[e] enpeyren. ¶ For þat god  
 wil nat suffren hym to trauaile. to whom þat trauayl  
 nis nat couenable. ¶ An oper man is perfit in alle  
 uertues. *and* is an holy man *and* neye to god so þat þe  
*purueaunce* of god wolde demen þat it were a felony  
 þat he were touched wiþ any aduersites. so þat he ne

or the driver away  
 of evil, but God,  
 the physician of  
 souls, who knows  
 what is necessary  
 for men, and  
 bestows it upon  
 them? From this  
 source spring  
 that great marvel  
 —the order of  
 destiny—wrought  
 by the wisdom of  
 God, and marvel-  
 ed at by ignorant  
 men. But, now  
 let us notice a  
 few things con-  
 cerning the depth  
 of the Divine  
 knowledge which  
 human reason  
 may comprehend.  
 The man you  
 deem just, may  
 appear otherwise  
 to the omniscient  
 eye of Providence.  
 When you see  
 apparent irregu-  
 larities—unex-  
 pected and un-  
 4004

wished for—deem  
 them to be rightly  
 done. Let us  
 suppose a man so  
 well behaved, as  
 to be approved of  
 God and man—  
 but not endowed  
 with firmness of  
 mind, so that the  
 reverses of for-  
 tune will cause  
 him to forgo his  
 probity, since with  
 it he cannot re-  
 tain his prosper-  
 ity. A wise Pro-  
 vidence, knowing  
 that adversity  
 might destroy  
 this man's in-  
 tegrity, averts  
 from him that

[\* fol. 31 b.]  
 adversity which  
 he is not able to  
 sustain. Another  
 man is thoroughly  
 virtuous, and  
 approaches to the  
 purity of the deity  
 —him Providence  
 deems it an injus-  
 tice to oppress by  
 adversity, and  
 therefore exempts

3991 *hap*—MS. *habe*  
 3993 *wot*—MS. *wote*, C. *wot*  
 3994 [þat]—from C.  
 3995 *don*—MS. *done*, C. *don*  
*miracle*—MS. *mirache*, C.  
*miracle*  
*ordre*—MS. *ordre* of  
 3996 *alle*—al  
*doþ*—MS. *doþe*

3996 *whiche*—which  
 3997 [þat]—from C.  
 3999 *mans*—mannes  
 4000 *pilk*—thilke  
 4004 *liked[e]* (*both*)—lykede  
 4005 *is don*—MS. *is to don*  
 4006 [*world*]—from C.  
*ryȝt[e]*—ryhte  
 4007 *wicked[e]*—wykkede

4010 *vnstedfast*—vnstydefast  
 4011 [þat]—from C.  
*wolde*—wol  
 4015 *manere*—man  
*myȝt[e]*—myhte  
 4016 *wil*—wol  
 4018 *neye*—negh



him even from bodily disease. Providence often gives the direction of public affairs to good men, in order to curb and restrain the malice of the wicked. To some is given a mixture of good and evil, according to what is most suitable to the dispositions of their minds. Upon some are laid moderate afflictions, lest they wax proud by too long a course of prosperity. Others suffer great adversities that their virtues may be exercised, and strengthened by the practice of patience. Some fear to be afflicted with what they are able to endure. Others despise

4036

what they are unable to bear; and God punishes them with calamities, to make them sensible of their presumption. Many have purchased a great name by a glorious death. Others by their unshaken fortitude, have shown that virtue cannot be overcome by adversity. These things are done justly, and in order, and are for the good of those to whom they happen. From the same causes it happens, that sometimes adversity and sometimes prosperity falls to the lot of the wicked. None are surprised to see bad men afflicted—they get

wil nat suffre þat swiche a man be moeued wip any manere maladie. ¶ But so as seide a philosopre [the moore excellent by me]. þe aduersites comen nat (he seide in grec!) þere þat uertues han edified þe bodie of þe holy man. and ofte tyme it bitideþ þat þe somme of þinges þat ben to don is taken to good folk to gouerne. for þat þe malice habundaunt of shrewes sholde ben abatid. and god zeueþ and departiþ to oþer folk prosp[er]ites and aduersites ymedeled to hepe aftir þe qualite of hire corages and remordip som folk by aduersites. for þei ne sholden nat wexen proude by longe welefulnesse. and oþer folk he suffreþ to ben trauayled wip harde þinges. ¶ For þat þei sholden conferme þe vertues of corage by þe vsage and exercitacioun of pacience. and oþer folke dreden more þen þei auzten þe wiche þei myzt[en] wel beren. and pilke folk god ledip in to experience of hem self by aspre and sorweful þinges. ¶ And many oþer folk han bouzt honorable renoune of þis worlde by þe pris of glorious deef. and som men þat ne mowen nat ben ouer-comen by tourment han zeuen ensample to oþer folk þat vertue ne may nat be ouer-comen by aduersites. ¶ and of alle þise þinges þer nis no doute þat þei ne ben don ryztfully and ordeinly to þe profit of hem to whom we seen þise þinges bitide. ¶ For certys þat aduersite comeþ some tyme to shrewes. and some tyme þat þei desiren it comeþ of þise forseide causes and of sorweful þinges þat bytyden to shrewes. Certys no man ne wondrep. For alle men wenen þat þei han wel desersed it. and þei ben of wicked merite of whiche

4021 *evil*—wol  
4022 *swiche*—swych  
4022 *manere*—bodily  
4022-3 [*the—me*]—from C.  
4023 *þe aduersites*—nat  
—omitted  
4024 *þere*—omitted  
4028 *don*—done  
to (2)—MS. so  
to good—*gouerne*—to  
gouerne to goode folk

4028 *oþer*—oother  
4030 *som*—some  
4031 *sholden*—sholde  
4033 *conferme*—confermen  
4034 *corage*—corages  
4036 *myzt[en]*—myhten  
4037 *hem*—hym  
4037 *sorweful*—sorwful  
4038 *oþer*—oother  
4039 *worlde*—world  
of (2)—of the

4041 *oþer*—oother  
4046 *comeþ*—comth  
*some (both)*—som  
þat þei—MS. þei þat, C.  
þat that they  
4047 *comeþ*—comth  
4050 *wicked*—wykkede  
*merite*—MS. uerite, C.  
meryte

shrewes þe tourment som tyme agastep oþer to done folies. *and* som tyme it amendeþ hem þat suffren þe tourmentis. ¶ And þe prosperite þat is ȝeuen to shrewes shewep a grete argument to good[e] folk what þing þei sholde demen of þilke wilfulnesse þe whiche prosperite men seen ofte serue to shrewes. in þe whiche þing I trowe þat god dispensip. for perauenture þe nature of som man is so ouerþrowyng to yuel *and* so vncouenable þat þe nedy pouerte of hys house-hold myȝt[e] rapen egren hym to done felonies. *and* to þe maladie of hym god puttip remedie to ȝeuen hym rychesse. *and* som oþer man byholdip hys conscience defouled wip synnes *and* makip comparisoun of his fortune *and* of hym self ¶ *and* dredip perauenture þat hys blisfulnesse of whiche þe vsage is ioyful to hym þat þe lesyng of þilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorweful to hym. *and* þefore he wol chaunge hys maneres. *and* for he dredip to lese hys fortune. he forletip hys wickednesse. to oþer folk is welefulnesse ȝeuen vnworþily þe whiche ouerþrowep hem in to destruccioun þat þei han deserued. *and* to som oþer folk is ȝeuen power to punissen. for þat it shal be cause of continuacioun *and* exercisinge to good[e] folk. *and* cause of tourment to shrewes. ¶ For so as þer nis none alyauce bytwixe good[e] folke *and* shrewes. ne shrewes ne mowen nat accorden amonges hem self *and* whi nat. for shrewes discorden of hem self by her vices þe whiche vices al to renden her consciences. *and* don oft[e] tyme þinges þe whiche þinges whan þei han don hem. þei demen þat þo þinges ne sholde nat han ben don. for whiche þinge þilke souereyne purueaunce haþ maked oft[e] tyme

what they deserve. Their punishment, too, may cause amendment, or deter others from like vices. When the wicked enjoy felicity—the good should learn how little these external advantages are to be prized, which may fall to the lot of the most worthless. Another reason for dispensing worldly bliss to the wicked is, that indigence would prompt naturally violent and rapacious minds to commit the greatest enormities. Their disease God cures by the medicine of money. Some men will cease to do wrong for fear, lest their wealth be lost

4066 through their crimes. Upon others unmerited happiness is conferred, which at last precipitates them into deserved destruction. To some there is given the power of chastisement, in order both to exercise the virtues of the good and to punish the wicked. For as there is no alliance between good and bad, so neither can the vicious agree together. And how should they? Their vices make them at war with themselves, rending and tearing their consciences, and there is scarce anything they do, but what afterwards they disap-

4051 oþer—oother  
done—don  
4052 folies—felonies  
4054 grete—gret  
good[e]—goode  
4055 sholde—sholden  
þilke—thilke  
4056 serue—seruen  
whiche—which  
4057 dispensip—MS. dispis-

ip, C. dispensith  
4059 myȝt[e]—myhte  
4060 done—don  
4061 rychesse—Rychesses  
4065 whiche—which  
4068 MS. wrongly inserts  
welefulnesse after wickednesse  
4069-71 oþer—oother  
4073 good[e]—goode

4074 none—non  
4075 good[e]—goode  
4076 accorden—acordy  
4078 don—MS. done, C. don  
oft[e]—ofte  
4079 don—MS. done, C. don  
4080 sholde—sholden  
whiche þinge—which thing  
4081 haþ—MS. haþe  
oft[e]—ofte

prove of. Hence arises a signal miracle brought about by Providence—that evil [\* fol. 32.] men have often made wicked men good. For these latter having suffered injuries from the former, have become virtu-

ous, in order that they might not resemble those whom they so detested. It is only the Divine power that can turn evil to good, overruling it for his own purposes.

Nothing occurs by the caprice of chance in the realms of Divine Providence. Since God is the governor of all things, it is not lawful to man to attempt to comprehend the whole of the Divine economy, or to explain it in words. Let it suffice to know that God orders all things for the best.

And while he retains things created after his own likeness conformably to his goodness, he banishes evil by the cause of destiny out of his empire.

So that those evils which you seem to see are only imaginary.

But you are exhausted and weary with the prolixity of my reasoning, and look for relief from the harmony of my verse.

[*faire*] miracle so þat shrewes han makend oftyme shrewes to ben good[e] men. for whan þat som shrewes \* seen þat þei suffren wrongfully felonies of oþer shrewes þei wexen eschaufed in to hat[e] of hem þat anoien hem. and retournen to þe fruit of uertue. when þei studien to ben vnlyke to hem þat þei han hated.

¶ Certys þis only is þe deuyne myzt to þe whiche myzt yueles ben þan good. whan it vseþ þo yueles couenably and draweþ out þe effect of any good. as who seiþ þat yuel is good oonly by þe myzt of god. for þe myzt of god ordeyneþ pilk yuel to good. For oon ordre enbrasip alle þinges. so þat what wyzt [þat] departip fro þe resoun of þe ordre whiche þat is assigned to hym. algates 3it he slideþ in to an oþer ordre. so þat noþing nis leueful to folye in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. as who seiþ no þing nis wiþouten ordinaunce in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. ¶ Syn þat þe ryzt strong[e] god gouernip alle þinges in þis worlde for it nis nat leueful to no man to comprehend by witte ne vnfolden by worde alle þe subtil ordinaunces and disposiciouns of þe deuyne entent. for oonly it auzt[e] suffice to han lokend þat god hym self makere of alle natures ordeynip and dressip alle þinges to good. while þat he hastip to wiþhalden þe þinges þat he haþ makend in to hys semblaunce. þat is to seyn forto wiþholden þinges in to good. for he hym self is good he chaseþ oute al yuel of þe boundes of hys communalite by þe ordre of necessite destinable. For whiche it folweþ þat yif þou loke þe purueaunce ordeynynge þe þinges þat men wenen ben haboundaunt in erpes. þou ne shalt not seen in no place no þing of yuel. ¶ but I se now þat

4082 [*faire*]-from C.

oftyme-omitted

4083 good[e]-goode

4085 hat[e]-hate

anoien-anoyeden

4087 studien-omitted

vnlyke-vnlyk

4088-90 good-goode

4092 pilk-thilke

4093 [þat]-from C.

4094 þe (2)-thilke

whiche-which

4096 realme-Reame

4099 strong[e]-stronge

worlde-world

4100 no-omitted

witte-wit

4101 worde alle-word al

4102 auzt[e]-owhte

4104 good while-goode wyl

4105 haþ-MS. haþe

4108 of (1)-fro

4109 whiche-which

4111 ben haboundaunt-ben

outraious / or habownd-

ant

pou art charged wip þe wey3te of þe questioun[n] *and* very wip lengþe of my resoun. *and* þat pou abidest som swetnesse of songe. tak þan þis drau3t *and* whan pou art wel refreshed *and* refet pou shalt ben more stedfast to stye in to heyere questiouns. 4117

Take, then, this draught, with which when refreshed, you may more strongly proceed to higher matters.

## SI UIS CELSI IURA.

**Y**if pou wolt demen in þi pure pou3t þe ryztes or þe lawes of þe heye pund[ere]re. þat is to seyne of god. loke pou *and* bihold þe hey3tes of souereyne heuene. ¶ þere kepen þe sterres by ry3tful alliaunce of þinges hir olde pees. þe sonne ymoened by hys rody fire. ne destourbiþ nat þe colde cercle of þe moone. ¶ Ne þe sterre yclepid þe bere. þat enclinip hys rauyssynge courses abouten þe souereyne hey3t of þe worlde. ne þe same sterre vrsa nis neuer mo wasshen in þe depe westerne see. ne coueitip nat to dy3en hys flaumbes in þe see of [the] occian. al pou3 he see oper sterres yplounged in to þe see. ¶ And hesperus þe sterre bodip *and* tellip alwey þe late nyztes. And lucifer þe sterre bryngeþ a3eyne þe clere day. ¶ And þus makip loue enterchaungeable þe perdurable courses. *and* þus is discordable bataile yput oute of þe contre of þe sterres. þis accordaunce attempreþ by euene-lyke manere[s] þe elementes. þat þe moyste þinges striuen nat wip þe drye þinges. but 3iuen place by stoundes. *and* þat þe colde þinges ioynen hem by feip to þe hote þinges. *and* þat þe ly3t[e] fyre arist in to hey3te. *and* þe heuy erþes aualen by her wey3tes. ¶ by þise same cause þe floury yere 3eldep swote smellys in þe fyrste somer sesoun warmynge. *and* þe hote somer dryep þe cornes. *and*

[The syxte Metur.]

If thou wouldst explore the laws of the high Thunderer, behold the lofty heavens, where, bound by fixed laws, the stars keep their ancient peace. There the rosy Sun does not invade the moon's colder sphere. Nor doth the Bear stray from his appointed bounds, to quench his light in the western main. Vesper always makes its wonted appearance at eve.

4128

Lucifer ushers in the morn. So mutual love moves all things, and from the starry region banishes all strife. This concord in equal measures tempers the elements, so that the moist atoms war no more with the dry, nor heat with cold contends; but the aspiring flame soars aloft, while down the heavy earth descends. By these same causes the flowing year yields sweet smells in the warm spring-tide; the hot summer ripens the corn. Autumn comes crowned

4115 tak—MS. take, C. tak  
4116 refet—reflect  
shalt ben—shal be  
stedfast—stydefast  
4118 pou wolt—pou wys wilt  
4119 pund[ere]re — thon-  
seyne—seyn [derere]  
4120 bihold—MS. biholde, C.  
byhold [rody]  
4122 rody — MS. redy, C.

4122 fire—Fyr  
4123 cercle—clerke  
4125 courses—cours  
hey3t—heyhte  
4127 westerne—westrene  
dy3en—deeyn  
4128 [the]—from C.  
ho see—MS. it sewe, C. he  
see  
oper—oothre

4131 a3eyne—ayein  
4133 oute—owt  
4134 euene-lyke manere[s]—  
euenelyk maneres  
4135 striuen—stryuynge  
nat—omitted  
4136 but—omitted  
4138 ly3t[e] fyre arist—lyhte  
fyr arysith  
4140 yere—3er



with plenty, and  
winter wets the  
earth with  
showers.  
These changes  
give life and  
growth to all that  
breathe; and at  
last by death  
efface whatever  
has had birth.

[\* fol. 33 b.]  
Meanwhile the

4148

world's Creator,  
the Source of all,  
the Lawgiver, the  
wise Judge, sits  
above equitably  
directing all  
things. Those  
things which  
have been set in  
motion by him  
are also checked  
and forced to  
move in an end-  
less round, lest  
they go from  
their source, and  
become chaotic.

4157

This love is  
common to all  
things, and all  
things tend to  
good; so, urged  
by this, they all  
revert to that  
First Cause that  
gave them being.

autumpne comeþ aʒeyne heuy of apples. and þe fletyng  
reynne bydeweþ þe wynter. þis attemperaunce norryssiþ  
and brynggeþ furþe al þinge þat brediþ lyfe in þis  
worlde. ¶ and þilk same attemperaunce rauyssyng hideþ  
and hynymeþ and drenceþ vndir þe last[e] depe alle  
\*þinges yborn. ¶ Amonges þise þinges sitteþ þe heye  
makere kyng and lorde. welle and. bygynnyng. lawe  
and wise Iuge. to don equite and gouerniþ and encliniþ  
þe bridles of þinges. and þo þinges þat he stireþ to don  
by moeuyng he wiþdraweþ and arestiþ and affermiþ þe  
moeueable or wandryng þinges. ¶ For ʒif þat he ne  
clepiþ nat aʒein þe ryzt goyng of þinges. and ʒif þat he  
ne constreyned[e] hem nat eftesones in to roundenesse  
enclined þe þinges þat ben now continued by stable  
ordinaunce. þei sholde deperten from hir welle. þat is  
to sein from hir bygynnyng and failen. þat is to sein  
tournen in to nauzt. ¶ þis is þe commune loue of alle  
þinges. and alle þinges axen to be holden by þe fyn of  
good. For ellys ne myʒten þei nat lasten yif þei ne  
come nat eftesones aʒeine by loue retourned to þe cause  
pat haþ ʒeuen hem beyng. þat is to seyn to god. 4162

## IAM NE IGITUR UIDES.

[The seunde  
prose.]

P. Do you see  
what follows  
from our argu-  
ments?

B. What is it?

P. That all for-  
tune is good.

B. How can that  
be?

P. Since all for-  
tune, whether  
prosperous or  
adverse, is for  
the reward of the  
good or the  
punishment of

Sest þou nat þan what þing folweþ alle þe þinges þat I  
haue seid. what þing quod I. ¶ Certys quod she  
outerly þat al fortune is good. and how may þat be  
quod .I. ¶ Now vndirstand quod she so as [alle  
fortune wheyther so it be Ioyeful fortune / or aspre]  
fortune is ʒiuen eiþer by cause of gerdonyng or ellys of  
exercisyng of goode folk or ellys by cause to punissen.

4142 comeþ aʒeyne — comth  
ayein

4143 reynne—reyn

4144 furþe al þinge—forth

alle thing

breðiþ lyfe—berith lyf

4145 worlde—world

þilk—thilke

4146 last[e] deþe—laste deth

4147 yborn—MS. yborne, C.

I-born

4148 lorde—lord

4149 wise—wys

4150 stireþ—sterith

don—gon

4151 þe—omitted

4153 clepiþ—klepede

4154 constreyned[e] — con-

streynede

roundenesse — Rownd-

nesses

4156 sholde—sholden

4158 tournen—torne

of—to

4150 be—ben

4161 eftesones aʒeine — eft

sones ayein

4162 haþ—MS. haþe

4163 þing—thinge

4165 outerly—al owtrely

al—alle

4168.7 [alle—aspre]—from

C.

4169 goode—good

or ellys to chastysen shrewes. ¶ þan is alle fortune good. þe whiche fortune is certeyne þat it be eiþer ryȝtful or profitable. ¶ For soþe þis is a ful verray resoun quod I. and yif I considere þe purueaunce and þe destine þat þou tauȝtest me a litel here byforne þis sentence is susteyned by stedfast resouns. but yif it like vnto þe lat vs noumbre hem amonges pilk[e] pinges of whiche þou seidest a litel here byforne þat þei ne were nat able to ben ywened to þe poeple. ¶ whi so quod she. for þat þe comune worde of men mysusiþ quod I. þis manere speche of fortune. and sein ofte tymes [þat] þe fortune of som wyȝt is wicked. wilt þou þan quod she þat I proche a litel to þe wordes of þe poeple so it seme nat to hem þat I be ouer moche departid as fro þe vsage of man kynde. as þou wolt quod I. ¶ Demest þou nat quod she þat al ping þat profitiþ is good. ȝis quod I. certis pilk ping þat exercisiþ or corigip profitiþ. I confesse it wel quod I. þan is it good quod she. whi nat quod I. but þis is þe fortune [quod she] of hem þat eiþer ben put in vertue and bataillen azeins aspre pinges. or ellys of hem þat eschewen and declinen fro vices and taken þe weye of vertue. ¶ þis ne may nat I denye quod I. ¶ But what seist þou of þe myrre fortune þat is ȝeuen to good folk in gerdoun deuiniþ ouȝt þe poeples þat it is wicked. nay forsoþe quod I. but þei demen as it soþe is þat it is ryȝt good. ¶ And what seist þou of þat oþer fortune quod she. þat al þouȝ it be aspre and restreiniþ þe shrewes by ryȝtful tourment. wenip ouȝt þe poeple þat it be good. nay quod I. ¶ But þe poeple demip þat it be most wrecched of alle pinges þat may ben þouȝt. war now and loke wel quod she lest þat we in folwyng þe opynioun of poeple haue con-

the bad, all fortune is good which is either just or useful. But let us put this opinion among those positions which thou saidst were not commonly believed by the people.

P. Why so?

B. Because it is a common expression that the fortune of such a one is bad.

P. Do you wish me to conform for awhile to the language of the people, lest we should seem to depart too much from the popular mode of expression?

B. As you please. P. Is everything profitable that is good?

B. Yes, certainly. P. That which exercises or corrects is profitable?

4186

B. It is.

P. Therefore it is good? B. Yes.

P. This is the fortune of the virtuous who combat with adversity, or of those who, relinquishing vice, pursue the path of virtue?

B. It is.

P. The vulgar regard that prosperity which is bestowed as a reward on the good to be beneficial, and they believe those calamities by which the wicked are punished as the most miserable things that can be imagined.

But in following the popular opinion, let us beware of being involved in some new and incredible consequence.

4174 here byforne—her by-forne

4175 stedfast—stydefast

4176 noumbre—nowmbren

4177 here byforne—her by-forne

4178 pilk[e]—thilke

4178 ywened—weened

4179 worde—word

4180 [þat]—from C.

4181 wicked—wykkede

4182 proche—aproche

4183 al—alle

4186 pilk—thilke

4188 [quod she]—from C.

4191 weye—wey

4193 deuiniþ—demyth

4194 ouȝt—awht

4195 soþe—soth

4198 ouȝt—awht

4199 be—is

B. What is that?  
P. We have decided that the fortune of the virtuous or of those growing up in virtue must needs be good—but that the fortune of the wicked must be most wretched.

B. That's true, though none dare acknowledge it.  
P. Why so?

The wise man ought not to be cast down, when he has to wage war with Fortune, no more than the valiant man ought to be dismayed on hearing the noise of the

[\* fol. 83.]  
battle. The dangers of war enable the one to acquire more glory, and the difficulties of the other aid him to confirm and im-

4217  
prove his wisdom. Thus virtue, in its literal acceptation, is a power that, relying on its own strength, overcomes all obstacles. You, who have made so much progress in virtue, are not to be carried away by delights and bodily lusts. You must engage in a fierce conflict with every fortune—with adversity, lest it dismay you—with prosperity, lest it corrupt you. Seize the *golden mean* with all your strength. All below or above this line is a contemptible and a thankless felicity. The choice of fortune lies in your own hands, but remember that even adverse fortune, unless it exercises the

fessed *and* concluded ping pat is vnable to be wened to be poeple. what is pat quod I ¶ Certys quod she it folweþ or comeþ of þinges pat ben graunted pat alle fortune what so euer it be. of hem pat eyþer ben in possessioun of vertue. [or in the ences of vertu] or ellys in þe purchasyng of vertue. pat pilke fortune is good.

¶ And pat alle fortune is ryzt wicked to hem pat dwellen in shrewednesse. as who seiþ. *and* þus wenep nat þe poeple. ¶ þat is soþe quod I. ¶ Al be it so pat noman dar confessen it ne byknoven it. ¶ whi so quod she. For ryzt as no strong man ne semeþ nat to abassen or disdaignen as \*ofte tyme as he hereþ þe noise of þe bataile. ne also it ne semeþ nat to þe wyse man to beren it greuously as oft[e] as he is lad in to þe strif of fortune. for boþe to þat on man *and* eke to þat oþer pilke difficulte is þe matere to þat oon man of encesse of his glorious renoun. *and* to þat oþer man to conferme hys sapience. pat is to seine þe asprenesse of hys estat.

¶ For perfore is it called uertue. for þat it sustenip *and* enforceþ by hys strengþes þat it nis nat ouer-comen by. aduersites. ¶ Ne certys þou þat art put in þe encesse or in þe heyzt of uertue ne hast nat comen to fleten wip delices *and* forto welken in bodyly lust. ¶ þou sowest or plauntest a ful egre bataile in þi corage azeins euery fortune. for þat þe sorweful fortune ne confounde þe nat. ne þat þe myrre fortune ne corruppe þe nat. ¶ Occupy þe mene by stedfast strengþes. for al þat euer is vndir þe mene. or ellys al þat ouer-passeþ þe mene despiseþ welefulnesses. ¶ As who seiþ. it is vicious *and* ne hap no mede of hys trauaile. ¶ For it is set in þoure hand. as who seiþ it lieþ in þoure power what fortune þow is leuest. þat is to seyne good or yuel. ¶ For alle fortune

4204 *comeþ*—oomth  
4206 [or—*vertu*] from C.  
4208 *wicked*—wykkede  
4210 *soþe*—soth  
4211 *confessen*—confesse  
4212 *no strong*—the stronge  
4213 *abassen*—abayssen

4215 *oft[e]*—ofte  
4219 *seine*—seyn  
4223 *heyzt*—heyhte  
4224 *welken*—wellen  
4226 *confounde*—MS. con-  
founded, C. confownde  
4227 *Occupy*—Ocuype

4229 *stedfast*—stydfast  
4230 *hap*—MS. hape  
4231 *set*—MS. sette, C. set  
4232 *lieþ*—lith  
4233 *seyne*—seyn

pat semeþ sharpe or aspre yif it ne exercise nat þe good virtues of the  
folk. ne chastisiþ þe wicked folk. it punisseþ. 4235 the good or chastises  
the wicked, is a  
punishment.

## BELLA BIS QUENIS. ET CETERA.

**Þ**E wrekere attrides ¶ pat is to seyne agamenon pat  
wrouzt[e] and continued[e] þe batailes by ten 3ere  
recouered[e] and purged[e] in wrekyng by þe destruc-  
cioun of troie þe loste chambres of mariage of hys broþer 4239  
pis is to seyn þat [he] agamenon wan a3ein Eleine þat  
was Menelaus wif his broþer. In þe mene while þat  
pilke agamenon desired[e] to 3euen sailes to þe grek-  
ysshe nauye and bouzt[e] a3ein þe wyndes by blode. he  
vncloped[e] hym of pite as fader. and þe sory prest  
3iueþ in sacrificyng þe wreched kuytting of prote of þe  
douzter. ¶ pat is to sein þat agamenon lete kuytten þe  
prote of hys douzter by þe prest. to maken alliaunce wiþ 4247  
hys goddes. and for to haue wynde wiþ whiche he  
myzt[e] wende to troie. ¶ Itakus þat is to sein vlixies  
bywept[e] hys felawes ylorn þe whiche felawes þe  
fiers[e] pholifemus ligginge in his grete Caue had[de]  
freten and dreint in hys empty wombe. but napeles  
polifemus wood for his blinde visage 3eld to vlixies ioie  
by hys sorowful teres. pis is to seyn þat vlixes smot  
oute þe eye of poliphemus þat stod in hys forhede. for 4255  
whiche vlixes hadde ioie whan he saw poliphemus  
wepying and blynde. ¶ Hercules is celebrable for hys  
hard[e] trauaile he dawntede þe proude Centauris half  
hors half man. and he rafte þe despoilyng fro þe

[The seuende  
Metur.]Atrides carried on  
a ten years' war to  
punish the licen-  
tious Paris.With blood  
he purchased  
propitious  
gales for the  
Grecian fleet, by  
casting off all  
fatherly pity, and  
sacrificing his  
daughter  
Iphigenia to the  
vengeance of  
Diana.Ulysses bewailed  
his lost mates,  
devoured by  
Polyphemus,  
but, having de-  
prived the Cyclop  
of his sight, he  
rejoiced to hear  
the monster's  
roar.Hercules is  
renowned for his  
many labours, so  
successfully over-  
come. He over-  
threw the proud  
Centaur;

4234 *sharpe*—sharp  
4236 *seyne*—seyn  
4237 *wrouzt[e]*—wrowhte  
4238 *continued[e]*—continuede  
4239 *3ere*—yere  
4238 *purged[e]*—purgede  
4240 *[he]*—from O.  
4241 *wan*—MS. wanne, C. wan  
4242 *desired[e]*—desirede  
4243 *bouzt[e]*—bowhte  
4244 *blode*—blood  
4244 *uncloped[e]*—vnclotheð  
4245 *as*—of  
4245 *kuytting*—MS. kny-

tyng, C. kutyngge  
4246 *lete*—let  
4247 *kuytten*—MS. knydden, C.  
4248 *kutryn*  
4249 *have*—han  
4249 *myzt[e]*—wende—myhte  
4250 *wenden*  
4250 *bywept[e]*—by-wepte  
4251 *ylorn*—MS. ylorne, C. y-  
lorn  
4251 *fiers[e]*—feerse  
4252 *had[de]*—hadde  
4253 *3eld*—yald  
4254 *sorowful*—sorwful

4254 *smot*—MS. smote, C.  
4255 *smot*  
4255 *oute*—owt  
4256 *stod*—MS. stode, C. stood  
4257 *forhede*—forehed  
4258 *saw*—say  
4258 *hard[e]*—trauaille—harde  
4259 *trauayles*  
4259 *dawntede*—MS. dawnded,  
C. dawntede  
4259 *half*—MS. hals  
4260 *rafte*—byrafte  
4261 *fro*—from



he slew the  
Nemean lion and  
wore his skin as  
a trophy of his  
victory; he smote  
the Harpies with  
his arrows; he  
carried off the  
golden apples of  
the Hesperides,  
and killed the  
watchful dragon;  
he bound Cer-  
berus with a  
threefold chain;  
he gave the body  
of proud Diomedes  
as food for the  
tyrant's horses;

he slew the ser-  
pent Hydra;  
he caused  
Achelus to hide  
his blushing  
head within  
his banks;

he left Antæus  
dead upon the  
[\* fol. 33 b.]  
Lybian shore;  
he appeased  
Evander's wrath  
by killing Cacus;

he slew the  
Erymanthean  
boar;

and bore the  
weight of Atlas  
upon his  
shoulders.

These labours  
justly raised him  
to the rank of a  
god.

Go then, ye noble  
souls, and follow  
the path of this  
great example.

cruel lyoun þat is to seyne he slouȝ þe lyoun *and*  
rafte hym hys skyn. he smot þe brids þat hyȝten  
arpijs [in þe palude of lyrne] wiþ certeyne arwes.  
he rauyssed[e] applis fro þe wakyng dragoun. *and*  
hys hand was þe more heuy for þe golde[ne]  
metal. He drouȝ Cerberus þe hound of helle by  
hys treble cheyne. he ouer-comer as it is seid hap  
put an vnmeke lorde fodre to hys cruel hors ¶ þis is  
to sein. þat hercules slouȝ diomedes *and* made his hors  
to etyn hym. and he hercules slouȝ Idra þe serpent *and*  
brend[e] þe venym. and achelaus þe flode defouled[e] in  
his forhede dreint[e] his shamefast visage in his  
strondes. þis is to sein þat achelaus coupe transfigure  
4273 hym self in to dyuerse lykenesse. *and* as he fauȝt wiþ  
orcules at þe laste he turnid[e] hym in to a bole. and  
hercules brak of oon of hys hornes. *and* achelaus for  
shame hidde hym in hys ryuer. ¶ And [he] hercules  
\*cast[e] adoun Antheus þe geaunt in þe strondes of  
libye. *and* kacus apaised[e] þe wrappes of euander. þis  
is to sein þat hercules slouȝ þe Monstre kacus *and*  
apaished[e] wiþ þat deep þe wrappe of euander. ¶ And  
þe bristled[e] boor marked[e] wiþ scomes þe sholdres of  
hercules. þe whiche sholdres þe heye cercle of heuene  
sholde preste. *and* þe laste of his labours was þat he  
sustened[e] þe heuene vpon his nekke vnbowed. *and* he  
deserued[e] eftsones þe heuene to ben þe pris of his  
laste trauayle ¶ Gop now þan ȝe stronge men þere as  
þe heye weye of þe grete ensample ledeþ ȝou. ¶ O nice  
4288 men whi nake ȝe ȝoure bakkes. as who seip. ¶ O ȝe

4280 *seyne*—seyne  
4281 *smot*—MS. smote, C.  
smot  
4282 [in—]lyrne—]from C.  
4283 *rauysed[e]*—rauyssh-  
edo  
4286 *seid*—MS. seide, C.  
sayd  
hap—MS. hape  
4287 *lorde*—lord  
4289 *etyn*—freten  
4270 *brend[e]*—brende

4270 *flode defouled[e]*—flood  
defowlede  
4271 *forhede dreint[e]*—for-  
hed dreynte  
4273 *lykenesse*—lyknesses  
4274 *turnid[e]*—tornede  
4275 *brak*—MS. brake, C.  
brak  
hys—hise  
4276 [he]—from C.  
4278-80 *apaished[e]*—apay-  
sede

4281 *bristled[e]*—brysteled  
marked[e]—markede  
4282 *cercle*—clerke  
4283 *preste*—thriste  
4285 *deserued[e]*—deseruede  
4286 *Gop*—MS. Gope  
þere—ther  
4287 *weye*—way  
4288 *nake*—MS. make, C.  
nake

slowe *and* delicat men whi fley 3e aduersites. *and* ne  
fyzten nat azeins hem by vertue to wynnen þe mede of  
þe heuene. for þe erþe ouer-comen 3eueþ þe sterres. 4291  
¶ þis is to seyne þat whan þat erþely lust is ouer-comen.  
a man is makid worpi to þe heuene.

O ye slothful  
ones, wherefore  
do ye basely fly!

4291

He who conquers  
earth doth gain  
the heavens.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS.

## INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

DIXERAT ORACIONISQUE CURSUM.

She hadde seid *and* tourned[e] þe cours of hir resoun to  
somme oper pinges to ben tretid *and* to ben ysped.  
þan seide I. Certys ryztful is þin amonestyng *and* ful  
digne by auctorite. but þat þou seidest som tyme þat  
þe questioun of þe deuyne purueaunce is enlaced wip  
many oper questiouns. I vndir-stonde wel *and* proue it  
by þe same pinge. but I axe yif þat þou wenest þat hap  
be any ping in any weys. *and* if þou wenest þat hap be  
any [thing] what is it. þan quod she. I haste me to  
3elden *and* assoilen þe to þe dette of my byheste *and*  
to shewen *and* opnen þe wey by whiche wey þou maist  
come azein to þi contre. ¶ but al be it so þat þe pinges  
whiche þat þou axest ben ryzt profitable to knowe.  
3itte ben þei diuers somewhat fro þe pape of my purpos.  
And it is to douten þat þou ne be makid weery by  
mysweys so þat þou ne mayst nat suffise to mesuren þe  
ryzt weye. ¶ Ne doute þe þer-of no ping quod I. for  
forto knowen pilke pinges to-gidre in þe whiche pinges  
I delite me gretly. þat shal ben to me in stede of reste.  
Syn it nis nat to douten of þe pinges folwyng whan  
euery side of þi disputisoun shal be stedfast to me by  
vndoutous feip. þan seide she. þat manere wol I don

[The fyrste prose.]

When Philo-  
sophy had thus  
spoken, and was  
about to discuss  
other matters I  
interrupted her.  
B. Thy exhorta-  
tion is just and  
worthy of thy  
authority, but  
thou saidst that  
the question  
of the Divine  
Superintendence  
or Providence is  
involved with  
many others—  
and this I believe.  
I am desirous,  
however, of know-  
ing whether  
there be such a  
thing as *Chance*,  
and what thou  
thinkest it is.

P. I hasten to  
fulfil my promise  
and to show the  
road to your own  
country. But al-  
though these  
things you ques-  
tion me about are  
profitable to  
know, yet they  
lead us a little out  
of our way. And  
by straying from  
the path you may  
be too fatigued to  
return to the  
right road.

B. Don't be  
afraid of that, for  
it will refresh me  
as much as rest  
to know these  
things in which I  
am delightfully

4289 *slowe*—MS. slou3, C.  
slowe  
fley—flee  
4292 *seyne*—seyn  
4294 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyd  
þe—by  
4297 *som tyme*—whilom  
4298 þe (2)—thy

4300 *þinge*—thing  
4302 [*thing*]*—*from C.  
4303 *3elden*—yilden  
4304 *assoilen*—MS. assailen, C.  
assoilen  
4305 *byheste*—byhest  
4304-6 *whiche*—which  
4306 *ben*—MS. bene

4307 *pape*—paath  
4312 *stede*—styde  
4314 *disputisoun*—disputa-  
cioun  
be—han ben  
stedfast—stydefast

interested.

P. I will then comply with thy requests. If we define Chance to be an event produced by an unintelligent motion, and not by a chain or connection of causes, I should then affirm that Chance is nothing and an empty sound. What room is there for folly and disorder where all things are restrained by order, through the ordinance of God? For it is a great truth that nothing can spring out of nothing. Now, if anything arises without the operation of a cause, it proceeds from nothing. But if this is impossible, then there can be no

4331

such a thing as Chance, as we have defined it.

B. Is there nothing, then, that may be called Chance or Fortune? Is there nothing (hid from the vulgar) to which these words may be applied?

P. Aristotle defines this matter with much precision and

[\* fol. 84.] probability.

B. How?

P. So often as a man does anything for the sake of any other thing, and another thing than what he intended to do is produced by other causes, that thing so produced is called *Chance*. As if a man trench the ground for tillage

þe. and bygan to spoken ryzt þus ¶ Certys quod she yif any wyzt diffinisse hap in þis manere. þat is to seyn. þat hap is bytidynge y-brouzt forþe by foelyshe moeuyng. and by no knyttyng of causes. ¶ I conferme þat hap nis ryzt nauzt in no wise. and I deme al outerly þat hap nis ne dwellip but a voys. ¶ As who seip. but an ydel worde wip outhen any significacioun of þing summittid to þat vois. for what place myzt[e] ben left or dwellynge to folie and to disordinaunce. syn þat god ledip and streynip alle þinges by ordre. ¶ For þis sentence is verray and soþe þat no þinge ne hap his beyng of nouzt. to [the] whiche sentence none of þise olde folk ne wipseide neuere al be it so þat þei ne vndirstoden ne moeueden it nauzt by god prince and gynner of wirkyng. but þei casten as a manere foundement of subgit material. þat is to seyn of [the] nature of alle resoun. and zif þat any þinge is woxen or comen of no causes. þan shal it seme þat þilke þinge is comen or woxen of nouzt. but yif þis ne may nat ben don. þan is it nat possible þat þere hap ben any swiche þing as I haue diffinissid a litel here byforne. ¶ How shal it þan ben quod I. nis þer þan no þing þat by ryzt may be cleped eyþer happe or ellis auenture of fortune. or is þer ouzt al \*be it so þat it is hidd fro þe poeple to whiche þise wordes ben couenable. Myn aristotul quod she. in þe book of his phisik diffinissep þis þing by short resoun and neyze to þe soþe. ¶ In whiche manere quod I. ¶ As ofte quod she as men don any þing for grace of any oper þing. and an oper þinge þan þilke þing þat men ententen to doon bytideþ by som[e] causes it is ycleped happe. ¶ Ryzt as a man dalf þe erþe by

4317 seyn—seyng

4318 forþe—forth

4322 worde—word

4323 myzt[e]—myhte

4324 left—lefte

4325 streynip—constreynyth

4326 soþe—soth

no þinge—nothing

hap—MS. hape

4327 [the]—from C.

4330 gynner—bygynners

4331 [the]—from C.

4332 zif—MS. zit, C. yif

þinge—thing

4335 þat—ben—þat hap be

hap—MS. hape

swiche—swych

4338 happe—hap

4339 hidd—MS. hidde, C.

hidd

4340 whiche—which

4342 neyze—nehg

whiche—which

4343 don—MS. done, C. don

4344 þinge—thing

4345 som[e]—some

4346 happe—hap

cause of tylienge of þe felde. *and* fond þere a gobet of golde by-doluen. þan wenen folk þat it is fallen by fortynous bytydyng. but for soþe it nis nat for nauzt for it hap hys propre causes of whiche causes þe cours vnforseyn and vnwar semþ to han maked happe. ¶ For yif þe tilier in þe erpe ne delue nat in þe felde. and yif þe hider of þe golde ne hadde hidd þe golde in pilke place. þe golde ne had[de] nat ben founde. þise ben þan þe causes of þe abreggyng of fortune hap. þe whiche abreggyng of fortune hap comeþ of causes encountrynge *and* flowyng to-gidre to hem selfe. *and* nat by þe entencionn of þe doer. ¶ For neiþer þe hider of þe gold. ne þe deluer of þe felde ne vndirstanden nat þat þe golde sholde han be founde. but as I seide. it bytidde *and* ran to-gidre þat he dalf þere as þat oþer hadde hidd þe golde. Now may I þus diffinissen happe. ¶ Happe is an vnwar bytydyng of causes assembled in þinges þat ben don for som oþer þinge. but þilke ordre procedyng by an vneschewable byndyng to-gidre. whiche þat descendþ fro þe wel of purueaunce þat ordeineþ alle þinges in hire places *and* in hire tymes makeþ þat þe causes rennen *and* assemblen to-gidre.

and find gold, then this is believed to happen by chance, although it is not so. For if the tiller had not ploughed the field, and if the hider of the gold had not concealed it in that spot, the gold had not been found. These, then, are the causes of a fortuitous acquisition which proceeds from a conflux of encountering causes, and not from the intention of the doer. For neither the hider of the gold nor the husbandman intended or understood that the gold should be found. But it happened by the concurrence of these two causes that the one did dig where the other had hidden the money. Chance, then, is an unexpected event, by a concurrence of causes, following an action designed for a particular purpose. This concurrence of causes proceeds from that order which flows from the fountain of Providence and disposes all things as to place and time.

4368

## RUPIS ACHEMENIE.

Tigris [*and*] eufrates resoluen *and* spryngen of a welle in þe kragges of þe roche of þe contre of achemenye pere as þe fleenge [batayle] ficchþ hire dartes retournid in þe brestes of hem þat folwen hem. ¶ And sone aftre þe same ryueres tigris *and* eufrates vnioygnen *and* de-

[The fyrste Metur.] Where the flying Parthian doth pierce his pursuers with his shafts, there from the Achemenian heights flow the Tigris and Eufrates, but soon

4347 of (1)—to  
fond — MS. fonde, C.  
fownde  
4348 golde—gold  
fallen—byfalle  
4349 for (2)—of  
4350 hap—MS. hape  
hys—hise  
4351 happe—hap  
4352 tilier—tylyere  
delue—dolue  
4353 hider—hydere  
golde—gold  
hidd—MS. hidde

4353-4 golde—gold  
4354 had[de]—hadde  
4355 fortune—fortuit  
whiche—which  
4356 fortune—fortuit  
comeþ—comth  
4357 flowyng—MS. folwyng,  
C. flowyng  
selfe—self  
4358 doer—doere  
hider—hidere  
4359 deluer—deluere  
felde—feeld  
vndirstanden—vndirstod—

4360 golde—gold  
4361 hidd—MS. hidde, C.  
hyd  
4362 happe (both)—hap  
4365 whiche—which  
4366 descendþ—MS. defend-  
eb, C. descendith  
wel—welle  
4369 [and]—from C.  
a—oo  
4371 [batayle]—from C.  
4373 þe—tho

their streams divide and flow into separate channels. But should they unite again, in the impetuous stream, boats, ships, and trees would be all intermingled, whirled about: and blind Chance seems to direct the current's course. But the sloping earth, the laws of fluids, govern these things. So though Chance seems to wander unrestrained, it is nevertheless curbed and restrained by Divine Providence.

[The 2<sup>d</sup>. prose.]

B. Is there any *free-will* in this chain of cohering causes? Or doth the *chain of destiny* constrain the motions of the human mind?

P. There is a freedom of the will possessed by every rational being. A rational being has judgment to judge of and discern every-thing. Of himself he knows what he is to avoid or to desire. He seeks what he judges desirable, and he shuns what he deems should be avoided. A rational being possesses, then, the liberty of choosing and rejecting. This liberty is not equal in all beings. In heavenly substances, as spirits, &c., judgment is clear, and the will is incorruptible, and has a ready and efficacious power of doing things which are desired.

[\* fol. 84 b.]

parten hire watres. and yif þei comen to-gidre *and* ben assembled *and* clepid to-gidre in to o cours. þan moten pilke þinges fletyn to-gidre whiche þat þe water of þe entrechaungyng flode bryngeþ þe shippes *and* þe stokkes araced wiþ þe flood moten assemble. *and* þe watres ymedlyd wrappiþ or implieþ many fortunel happes or maneres. þe whiche wandryng happes napeles pilke enclynyng lowenes of þe erþe. *and* þe flowyng ordre of þe slidyng water gouerniþ. ¶ Ryzt so fortune þat semeþ as [þat] it fletip wiþ slaked or vngouerned[e] bridles. It suffriþ bridles þat is to seyn to ben gouerned *and* passeþ by pilke lawe. þat is to sein by þe deuyne ordinaunce.

4386

#### ANIMADUERTO INQUAM.

þis vndirstonde I wel quod I. *and* accorde wel þat it . is ryzt as þou seist. but I axe yif þer be any liberte or fre wil in þis ordre of causes þat cliuen þus to-gidre in hem self. ¶ or ellys I wolde witen yif þat þe destinal cheine constreiniþ þe moeueyng of þe corages of men. yis quod she þer is liberte of fre wille. ne þer ne was neuer no nature of resoun þat it ne hadde liberte of fre wille. ¶ For euery þing þat may naturely vsen resoun. it haþ doom by whiche it discerniþ *and* demip euery þing. ¶ þan knoweþ it by it self þinges þat ben to fleen. *and* þinges þat ben to desiren. *and* pilk þing þat any wyzt demeþ to ben desired þat axeþ or desireþ he *and* fleep [thilke] þing þat he troueþ ben to fleen. ¶ wherfore in alle þinges þat resoun is. in hem also is libertee of willyng *and* of nillynge. ¶ But I ne ordeyne nat. as who seiþ. I ne graunte nat þat þis libertee be euene like in alle þinges. forwhi in þe souereyns deuynes substaunces. þat is to \*seyn in spiritiz ¶ Iugement is

4374 *to-gidre*—to-gyders

4376 *whiche*—which

4377 *flode*—flood

4378 *assemble*—assemblyn

4380 *enclynyng*—declynynge

4381 *lowenes*—lownesse

4383 [þat]—from C.

*ungouerned[e]*—vngouern-ede

4385 *þe*—thilke

4389 *or*—of

4390 *hem*—hym

4392 *yis*—MS. yif. C. yis

4392-94 *wille*—wil

4395 *whiche*—which

4397 *pilk*—thilke

4399 [thilke]—from C.



more clere *and* wil nat be corumped. *and* haþ myzt  
redy to speden þinges þat ben desired. ¶ But þe soules  
of men moten nedes ben more free whan þei loken hem  
in þe speculacioun or lokinge of þe deuyne pouzt. *and*  
lasse free whan þei sliden in to þe bodies. *and* zit lasse  
free whan þei ben gadred to-gidre *and* comprehendid in  
erþely membris. but þe last[e] seruage is whan þat þei  
ben zeuen to vices. *and* han yfalle fro þe possessioun of  
hire propre resoun ¶ For after þat þei han cast awaye  
hir eyen fro þe lyzt of þe souereyn soþefastnesse to lowe  
þinges *and* dirke ¶ Anon þei dirken by þe cloude of  
ignoraunce *and* ben troubled by felonous talentz. to þe  
whiche talentz whan þei approchen *and* assenten. þei  
hepen *and* encreasen þe seruage whiche þei han ioigned  
to hem self. *and* in þis manere þei ben caitifs fro hire  
propre libertee. þe whiche þinges napeles þe lokinge of  
þe deuyne purueaunce seep þat alle þinges byholdep  
*and* seep fro eterne. *and* ordeyneþ hem eueryche in her  
merites. as þei ben predestinat. *and* it is seid in grek.  
þat alle þinges he seep *and* alle þinges he hereþ. 4424

## PURO CLARUM LUMINE.

Homer wiþ þe hony mouþe. þat is to seyn. homer  
wiþ þe swete dities synged þat þe sonne is cleer by  
pure lyzt. napeles zit ne may it nat by þe inferme lyzt  
of hys bemes breken or percen þe inwarde entrailes of  
þe erþe. or ellys of þe see. ¶ so ne seep nat god makere  
of þe grete worlde to hym þat lokep alle þinges from on  
heye ne wiþstandiþ nat no þinges by heuynesses of erþe.  
ne þe nyzt ne wiþstondep nat to hym by þe blake  
cloudes. ¶ pilke god seep in o strook of pouzt alle  
þinges þat ben or weren or schullen come. ¶ *and* pilke

The souls of men must needs be more free when employed in the contemplation of the Divine Mind, and less so when they enter into a body, and still less free when enclosed and confined in earthly members; but the most extreme servitude is when they are given over to vice and wholly fallen from their proper reason. For at once they are enveloped by the cloud of ignorance and are troubled by pernicious desires, by yielding to which they aid and increase that slavery which they brought upon themselves, and thus even under the liberty proper to them, they remain captives. Yet the eye of Providence, beholding all things from eternity, sees all this and disposes according to their merit all things as they are predestinated. He, as Homer says of the sun, *sees and hears all things.*

[The .24<sup>th</sup>. Metar.]

The sweet-tongued Homer sings of the sun's pure light. Yet the sun's beams cannot pierce into the inner bowels of the earth, nor into the depths of the sea. But God, the world's maker, beholding from on high, has his vision impeded neither by earth nor cloud. At a glance he sees all events, present, past, and future.

4405 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4411 *last[e]*—laste  
4412 *fro*—from  
4415 *cloudes*—clowdes  
4418 *whiche*—which

4423 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð  
4425 *mouþe*—Mouth  
4428 *percen*—MS. perten,  
C. percen  
*inwarde*—inward

4430 *worlde*—world  
*on heye*—an hegh  
4431 *nat*—omitted  
4434 *schullen come*—shollen  
comyn

God, then, that alone sees all things, may indeed be called the true Sun.

god for he lokeþ *and* seeþ alle þinges al oon. þou maist seyn þat he is þe verray sonne.

4436

## TAMEN EGO EN INQUAM.

[The 34<sup>th</sup>. prose.]

B. I am distracted by a more difficult doubt than ever. God's foreknowledge seems to me inconsistent with man's free-will. For if God foresees all things, and cannot be deceived, then that which Providence hath foreseen must needs happen. If God from eternity doth foreknow not only the works, but the designs and wills of men, there can be no liberty of will—nor can there be any other action or will than that which a Divine and infallible Providence hath foreseen. For if things fall out

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contrary to such foreseeing, and are wrested another way, the presence of God in regard to futurity would not be sure and unerring—it would be nothing but an uncertain opinion of them; but I take it to be impious and unlawful to believe this of God. Nor do I approve of the reasoning made use of by some. For they say that a thing is not necessarily to happen because God hath foreseen it, but rather because it is to happen it cannot be hid from the Divine Providence.

þ An seide I now am I confounded by a more harde doute þan I was. what doute is þat quod she. ¶ For certys I coniecte now by whiche þinges þou art troubled. It semeþ quod I to repugnien *and* to contrarien gretly þat god knoweþ byform alle þinges. *and* þat þer is any fredom of liberte. for yif so be þat god lokeþ alle þinges byform. ne god ne may nat ben desseuiid in no manere. þan mot it nedes ben þat alle þinges bytyden þe whiche þat þe purueaunce of god haþ sein byform to comen. ¶ For whiche yif þat god knoweþ by-form nat oonly þe werkes of men. but also hir conseils *and* hir willes. þan ne shal þer be no liberte of arbitre. ne certys þer ne may ben noon oper dede ne no wille but þilke whiche þe deuyne purueaunce þat ne may nat ben desseuiid haþ feled byform ¶ For yif þat þei myzten wryþen away in oper manere þan þei ben purueyed. þan ne sholde þer ben no stedfast pre-science of þinge to comen but raþer an vncerteyn oppinioun. þe whiche þinge to trowen on god I deme it felonie *and* vnleueful. ¶ Ne I ne proeue nat þilk same resoun. as who seiþ I ne allowe nat. or I ne preise nat þilke same resoun by whiche þat som men wenen þat þei mowen assoilen *and* vnknyttien þe knot of þis questioun. ¶ For certys þei seyn þat þing nis nat to come for þat þe purueaunce of god haþ seyn it byforne. þat is to comen but raþer þe contrarie. ¶ And þat is þis þat for þat þe þing is to comen þat perfore ne may it nat ben hyd fro þe purueaunce of god.

4435 *al oon*—alone  
4437 *harde*—hard  
4445 *hap*—MS. hape  
4448 *whiche*—which  
4450 *wille*—will  
4451 *whiche*—which þat

4451 *hap*—MS. hape  
4453 *stedfast*—stydefast  
4454-55 *þinge*—thing  
4455 *on*—of  
4456 *þilk*—thilke  
4458 *whiche*—which

4459 *knot*—knotte  
4461 *come*—comyn  
4461 *hap*—MS. hape  
4464 *hyd*—MS. hydde, C.  
hidde

\*and in þis manere þis necessite slydiþ aȝein in to þe contrarie partie. ne it ne byhoueþ [nat] nedes þat pinges bytiden þat ben ypurueid. [but it by-hueth nedes / þat thinges þat ben to comyn ben yporueyid] but as it were ytrauailed. as who seiþ. þat þilke answeþe procediþ ryȝt as þouȝ men trauailden or weren bysy to enqueren þe whiche þing is cause of whiche pinges. as wheþer þe prescience is cause of þe necessite of pinges to comen. or ellys þat þe necessite of pinges to comen is cause of þe purueaunce. ¶ But I ne enforce me nat now to shewen it þat þe bytydyng of pinges y-wist byforn is necessarie. how so or in what manere þat þe ordre of causes haþ it self. al þouȝ þat it ne seme nat þat þe prescience brynge in necessite of bytydyng of pinges to comen. ¶ For certys yif þat any wyȝt sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat þe oppinioun be soþe of hym þat coniectiþ þat he sitteþ. and aȝeinward. al so is it of þe contrarie. yif þe oppinioun be soþe of any wyȝt for þat he sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat he sitte ¶ þan is here necessite in þat oon and in þat oþer. for in þat oon is necessite of sittinge. and certys in þat oþer is necessite of soþe but þerfore ne sitteþ nat a wyȝt for þat þe oppinioun of sittinge is soþe. but þe oppinioun is raper soþe for þat a wyȝt sitteþ by-forn. and þus al þouȝ þat þe cause of soþe comeþ of [þe] sytting. and nat of þe trewe oppinioun. Alȝates ȝitte is þer comune necessite in þat oon and in þat oþer. ¶ þus sheweþ it þat I may make semblable skils of þe purueaunce of god and of pinges to come. ¶ For al þouȝ for þat þat pinges ben to comen. þerfore ben þei purueid. nat certys for þei ben purueid. þerfore ne bytide þei nat. ȝit napeles byhoueþ it by necessite þat eieþer þe pinges to comen ben ypurueied of god. or ellys þat þe pinges þat ben

[\* fol. 35.]

Now by this reason necessity appears to change sides. For it is not necessary that the things which are foreseen should happen, but it is necessary that the things which are to befall should be foreseen. As if the question was, which was the cause of the other—prescience the cause of the necessity of future events, or the necessity the cause of the prescience of future events? But I will prove that, however the order of causes may stand, the event of things foreseen is necessary, although prescience doth not seem to impose a necessity upon future

things to fall out. For if a man sit—the belief in the sitting is true; and, on the other hand, if the opinion is true of his sitting, he must needs sit. In both cases there is a necessity—in the latter that the person sit—in the former, that the opinion concerning the other is true. But the man does not sit because the opinion of his sitting is true, but the opinion is true because the action of his being seated was antecedent in time. So that although the cause of truth arises from the sitting, there is a common necessity in both. Thus may we reason concerning Providence and future events.

4466 [nat]—from C.  
4467-8 [but—yporueyid]—  
from C.  
4471 pinges—thing  
4477 haþ—MS. haþe  
4480-82 soþe—soth

4486 soþe—sooth  
4487 soþe—soth  
4488 soþe—sooth  
4489 soþe comeþ — sooth  
comth  
[þe]—from C.

4490 comune—MS. comme,  
C. comune  
4493 come—comyn  
4494 to—omitted  
4494-95 purueid—MS. pur-  
ueide, C. purueyid



For allowing things are foreseen because they are to happen, and that they do not befall because they are foreseen, it is necessary that future events should be foreseen of God, or if foreseen that they should happen; and this alone is sufficient to destroy all idea of *free-will*. But it is preposterous to make the happening of temporal things the cause of eternal prescience, which we do in imagining that God foresees future events because they are to happen. And, moreover, when I know that anything exists, it is necessary for my belief that it should be. So

4513

also when I know that an event shall come to pass, it must needs happen. The event, therefore, of a thing foreseen must befall. Lastly, if a person judge a thing to be different to what it is—this is not knowledge, but a false opinion of it, and far from the true knowledge. If, therefore, a thing be so to happen that the event of it is neither necessary nor certain, how can any one foresee what is to happen? For as pure knowledge has no element in it of falsehood, so what is comprehended by true knowledge cannot be otherwise than as comprehended. Hence it is that true

purueied of god bitiden [s.] by necessite. ¶ And pis ping oonly suffiseþ I-nouȝ to distroien þe fredome of oure arbitre. þat is to seyn of oure fre wille ¶ But now [certes] sheweþ it wel how fer fro þe soþe and how vp so doun is pis ping þat we seyn þat þe bytydinge of temporel pinges is þe cause of þe eterne prescience. ¶ But forto wenen þat god purueiþ [the] pinges to comen. for þei ben to comen. what oþer ping is it but forto wene þat pilke pinges þat bitiden som tyme ben causes of pilke souereyne purueaunce þat is in god. ¶ And her-to I adde ȝitte pis ping þat ryȝt as whan þat I woot þat o ping is it byhoueþ by necessite þat pilke self ping be. and eke þat whan I haue knowe þat any ping shal bitiden so byhoueþ it by necessite þat pilk[e] same ping bytide. so folweþ it þan þat þe bytydyng of þe ping I wist by-forn ne may nat ben eschewed. ¶ And at þe last[e] yif þat any wyȝt wene a ping to ben oþer weyes þan it is. it nys nat oonly vnsience. but it is deceivable oppinioun ful diuerse and fer fro þe soþe of science. ¶ wherfore yif any ping be so to comen so þat þe bytydyng of it ne be nat certeyne ne necessarie. ¶ who may weten [byforn] þat pilke ping is to come. ¶ For ryȝt as science ne may nat be medelyd wip falsnesse. as who seiþ þat yif I woot a ping. it ne may nat be fals þat I ne woot it. ¶ Ryȝt so pilk ping þat is conceyued by science ne may [nat] ben noon oþer weyes þan [as] it is conceiued. For þat is þe cause whi þat science wantiþ lesyng. as who seiþ. whi þat wityng ne receyueþ nat lesyng of þat it woot. ¶ For it byhoueþ by necessite þat euery ping [be] ryȝt as science comprehendit it to be. what shal I þan sein. ¶ In whiche manere knoweþ god byforn þe pinges to comen.

4498 [s.]-from C.  
4499 *freedom*-freedom  
4500 *willa*-wil  
4501 [certes]-from C.  
4504 *purueiþ*-MS. *purueiþe*  
[the]-from C.  
4506 *bitiden*-bytydden  
*som tyme*-whilom

4509 *o*-a  
*self*-selue  
4510 *pinge*-thing  
4511. *pilk[e]*-thilke  
4513 *pinge*-thing  
4514 *last[e]*-laste  
4515 *nys*-is  
4518 *it*-hit

4519 [byforn]-from C.  
4522 *fals*-false  
4523 [nat]-from C.  
*ben*-MS. by, C. ben  
4524 *þan [as] it is*-MS. þan  
it is be  
4527 [be]-from C.  
4529 *whiche*-which

¶ yif þei ne be nat certeyne. ¶ For yif þat he deme  
þat þei ben to comen vneschewably. *and* so may be þat  
it is possible þat þei ne shullen \*nat comen. god is  
desseiued. but nat only to trowen þat god is desseiued.  
but for to speke it wiþ mouþe it is a felonous synne.  
¶ But yif þat god woot þat ryȝt so as þinges ben to  
comen. so shulle þei comen. so þat he wit[e] egaly. as  
who seiþ indifferently þat þinges mowen ben don or  
ellys nat don. what is pilke prescience þat ne compre-  
hendip no certeyne þinge ne stable. or ellys what differ-  
ence is þer bytwixe þe prescience. *and* pilke iape-worþi  
dyuynynge of Tiresie þe diuinour þat seide. ¶ Al þat  
I seie *quod* he eyþer it shal be. or ellys it ne shal nat  
be. Or ellis how moche is worþe þe diuyn prescience  
more þan þe oppinioun of mankynde yif so be þat it  
demeþ þe þinges vncerteyne as men don. of þe whiche  
domes of men þe bytydyng nis nat certeyne. ¶ But  
yif so be þat noon vncerteyne þinge may ben in hym  
þat is ryȝt certeyne welle of alle þinges. þan is þe  
bytydyng certeyne of pilke þinges whiche he haþ wist  
byforn fermely to comen. For whiche it folweþ þat þe  
freedom of þe conseils *and* of þe werkes of mankynde nis  
non syn þat þe þouȝt of god seep alle þinges with outen  
errour of falsnesse byndeþ *and* constreiniþ hem to a  
bitidyng by necessite. *and* yif [this] þing be on-is  
grauntid *and* receyued. þat is to seyn. þat þer nis no  
fre wille. þan sheweþ it wel how gret destruccion *and*  
how grete damages þer folwen of þinges of mankynde.  
¶ For in ydel ben þer þan purposed *and* byhyȝt medes  
of goode folk. *and* peynes to badde folk. syn þat no  
moeuyng of free corage uoluntarie ne haþ nat deserued  
hem. þat is to seyn neiþer mede nor peyne. ¶ And it  
sholde seme þan þat pilke þinge is alþer worste whiche

knowledge cannot;  
err, because every-  
thing must pre-  
cisely be what  
true knowledge  
[\* fol. 55 b.]  
perceives it to be.  
What follows,  
then?

4534

How does God  
foreknow these  
uncertain con-  
tingencies?  
For if he thinks  
that a thing will  
inevitably hap-  
pen, which pos-  
sibly may not, he  
is deceived—but  
this is sheer blas-  
phemy.

4540

But if God dis-  
cerns that just  
as things are to  
come they shall  
come; if he  
knows that they  
may or may not  
come, what sort  
of prescience is  
this, which com-  
prehends nothing  
certain, nothing  
invariable?  
Or how does  
divine prescience  
differ from human  
opinion, if He  
hath an uncertain  
judgment of  
things, whereof  
the events are un-  
certain and un-  
fixed?

4551

But if there can  
be no uncer-  
tainty in his  
knowledge, who  
is the source of  
all certainty;  
the event of all  
things which he  
foreknows must  
be fixed and in-  
evitable.  
Whence it fol-  
lows that men  
have no free-  
dom in their  
designs and ac-  
tions; because  
the Divine Mind,  
endowed with an  
infallible fore-  
sight, constrains  
and binds them  
to a certain event.

4562

4534 *mouþe*—Mowth  
4536 *shulle*—shullyn  
wit[e]—wite  
4538 *don*—MS. done, C. y-  
doon  
4543 *moche*—mochel

4543 *worþe*—worth  
4549 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4550 *whiche*—which  
4551 *mankynde*—man-kynd  
4554 *[this]*—from C.  
4555 *grauntid*—ygraunted

4558 *medes of*—Meedes to  
4560 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4562 *alþer worste whiche*—  
alderworst which

Rewards and punishments now deemed just and equitable, will be considered most unjust, when, it is allowed, that mankind are not prompted by any will of their own, to either virtue or vice, but in all their actions are impelled by a fatal necessity.

4570

Nor would there be such things as virtue or vice, but such a medley of the one and the other as would be productive of the greatest confusion. And from this it will follow—that since all order comes of Divine Providence, and that there is no freedom of the human will, that also our vices must be referred to the author of all good—which is a most impious opinion. Then is it useless to hope for anything from God, or to pray to him. For why should men do either, when all they can desire is irreversibly predetermined? Hope and prayer being thus ineffectual, all intercourse is cut off between God and man.

4588

By reverent and humble supplication we earn divine grace, a most inestimable favour, and are able to associate with the Deity, and to unite ourselves to the inaccessible light.

pat is nowe demed. for alper moste iuste *and* moste ryztful. pat is to seyn pat shrewes ben punyssed. or ellys pat good[e] folk ben ygerdoned. þe whiche folk syn pat þe *propre* wille [ne] sent hem nat to pat oon ne to pat oper. pat is to seyn. neþer to good[e] ne to harme. but constreineþ hem certeyne necessite of þinges to comen. ¶ þanne ne shollen þer neuer ben ne neuer weren vice ne vertue. but it sholde raper ben confusioun of alle desertes medlid wipoute discrecioun. ¶ And zitte per folweþ an oper inconuenient of þe whiche per ne may ben pouzt ne more felonous ne more wikke. *and* pat is pis pat so as þe ordre of þinges is yledd *and* comeþ of þe purueaunce of god. ne pat no þing nis leueful to þe conseils of mankynde. as who seiþ pat men han no power to done no þing. ne wilne no þing. þan folweþ it pat oure vices ben referred to þe mak[er]e of alle good. as who seiþ þan folweþ it. pat god ayt[e] han þe blame of oure vices. syn he constreiniþ by necessite to don vices. þan nis þer no resoun to han hopen in god. ne forto preien to god. ¶ For what sholde any wyzt hopen to god. or whi sholde he preien to god. syn pat þe ordenaunce of destine whiche pat ne may nat ben enclined. knytteþ *and* streiniþ alle þinges pat men may desiren. ¶ þan sholde þere be don away pilke only alliaunce bytwixen god *and* men. pat is to seien to hopen *and* to preien. but by þe preis of ryztfulnesse *and* of veray mekenesse we deserue þe gerdoun of þe deuyne grace whiche pat is inestimable. pat is to sein pat it is so grete pat it ne may nat ben ful ypreised. *and* pis is oonly þe manere. pat is to seyen hope *and* prayeres. for whiche it semeþ pat [men] mowen spoken

4563 *nowe*—MS. *newe*, C. *now*  
alper *moste iuste*—alder  
moost iust  
*moste*—most  
4565-67 *good[e]*—goode  
4566 *wille*—wil  
[ne]—from C.  
4571 *wipoute*—with-owten  
4573 *pouzt*—thoght

4574 *yledd*—MS. *yledde*, C.  
yled  
4575 *comeþ*—comth  
4577 *done*—doon  
4578 *mak[er]*—makers  
4579 *ayt[e]*—owhte  
4584 *whiche*—which  
4588 *preis*—prys  
*ryztfulnesse*—Rihtwesse-

nesse  
4588 *deserue*—desseruyn  
4590 *deuyne*—MS. *deuynes*,  
C. *dyuyne*  
4590-93 *whiche*—which  
4591 *grete*—gret  
4593 [men]—from C.  
*spoken*—speke

wip god. *and* by resoun of supplicacioun ben conioigned to pilk clernesse þat nis nat approached no raper or pat men byseken it *and* emprenten it. And yif men ne wene [nat] þat [hope] ne preiers ne han no strengþes. by þe necessite of þinges to comen y-resceiued. what þing is þer þan by whiche we mowen be conioygned *and* clyuen to pilke souereyne prince of þinges. ¶ For whiche it byhounþ by necessite þat þe lynage of mankynde as \*þou songe a litel here byforne ben departed *and* vnoygned from hys welle *and* faylen of hys bygynyng. þat is to seien god.

If men believe that hope and prayer have no power because of the necessity of future events, by what other way can we be united, and hold fast to the sovereign Lord of all things?

4599

Wherefore mankind must be dis-severed and dis-united from the source of its ex-  
[\* fol. 36.]  
istence, and shrink from its beginning.

4604

## QUE NAM DISCORS

What discordable cause hap to-rent *and* vnoygned þe byndyng or þe alliaunce of þinges. þat is to seyne þe coniunccioun of god *and* of man. ¶ whiche god hap establisshed so grete bataile bitwixen pise two soþefast or verray þinges. þat is to sein bytwixen þe purueaunce of god *and* fre wille. þat þei ben synguler *and* diuided. ne þat þei ne wolen nat ben medeled ne coupled to-gidre. but þer nis no discorde to [tho] verray þinges. but þei cleuen certeyne al wey to hem self. but þe þouzt of man confounded *and* ouerþrowen by þe dirke membris of þe body ne may nat by fir of his dirk[ed] lokyng. þat is to seyn by þe vigour of hys insyzt while þe soule is in þe body knowen þe pinne subtil knythynges of þinges. ¶ But wherfore eschaufþ it so by so grete loue to fynden pilke note[s] of soþey-couered. (*glosa*) þat is to sein wherfore eschaufþ þe þouzt of man by so grete desir to knowen pilke notificaciouns þat ben yhidd vndir þe couertours of soþe. woot it ouzt pilke þinges

[The. 3<sup>de</sup>. Metur.]  
Say what discordant cause looses the bonds of things?

4607

What power doth make these two great truths (i. e. Providence and Free-will) contend, which when separate are plain and clear, but united appear dark and perplexed?

4613

The mind of man enumbered by the earthly body, can never, with her cloudy sight, discover the subtle and close bonds of things.

4617

But why does man burn with ardour to learn the hidden notes of truth? Why gropes he for he knows not what? None seek to know what is known.

4595 *pilk*—thilke  
4596 *emprenten*—impetrent  
4597 [nat]—from C.  
[hope]—from C.  
4601 *whiche*—which  
4602 *byforne*—by-forn  
4605 *hap*—MS. hape  
4606 *seyne*—seyn  
4607 *whiche*—which

4608 *hap*—MS. hape  
*grete*—gret  
*soþefast*—soothfast  
4610 *wille*—wil  
4612 *discorde*—discord  
[tho]—from C.  
4613 *cleuen*—clyuen  
4615 *dirk[ed]*—derkyd  
4616 *while*—whil

4617 *knowen*—knowe  
4619-21 *grete*—gret  
*note[s]*—notes  
4619 *soþe*—soth  
4621 *yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C.  
lhyd  
4622 *soþe*—sooth  
*þinges*—thing

If he knows  
them not, what  
does he so blindly  
seek?

Who wishes for  
things he hath  
never known?  
Or if he seek,  
where shall he  
find them?  
Or if he find, how  
shall he be sure  
that he has found  
what he sought  
for? The pure  
soul that sees the  
divine thought,  
knows all the  
secret chains of  
things.

Yet, though now  
hidden in its  
fleshy members,  
it hath some re-  
membrance of its  
pure state—it re-  
tains the sums of  
things, but has  
lost their partic-  
ulars. He who  
seeks truth is not  
in either circum-  
stance (i. e. seek-  
ing for what he  
knows or knows  
not), he knoweth  
not all things,  
nor hath he  
wholly forgotten  
all.

But he ponders  
on what he  
knows, that he  
may add those  
things that he  
hath forgotten to  
those that he  
retains.

4625 [*Glosa*]-from C.  
4630 *þinge*-thing  
4631 *whiche*-which  
4631 *woot*-not  
4631 *nat*-nawit  
4632 *coupe*-kowde  
4634 [*þa*]-from C.  
4634 *where*-whor

þat it anguissous desirþ to knowe. as who seiþ nay.

¶ For no man ne trauaileþ forto witen þinges þat he woot.

4625 and þerfore þe texte seiþ þus. ¶ [*Glosa*] Si enim anima  
ignorat istas subtiles connexiones. *responde. unde est*  
*quod desiderat scire cum nil ignotum possit desiderare.*

¶ But who traua[i]leþ to wyten þinges y-knowe. and yif  
þat he ne knoweþ hem nat. what sekiþ pilke blynde  
pouzt. what is he þat desirþ any þinge of whiche he  
woot ryzt nat. as who seiþ who so desirþ any þing  
nedis som what he knoweþ of it. or ellys he ne coupe

4633 nat desire it. or who may folwen þinges þat ne ben nat  
ywist ¶ and pouz [þat] he seke þo þinges where shal  
he fynden hem. what wyzt þat is al vnknowynge and  
ignoraunt may knowe þe forme þat is yfounde. ¶ But  
whan þe soule byholdeþ and seeþ þe heye pouzt. þat is  
to seyn god. þan knoweþ it to-gidre þe somme and þe  
singularites. þat is to seyn þe principles and eueryche  
by hym self. ¶ But now while þe soule is hidd in þe  
cloude and in þe derknesse of þe membris of þe body.  
it ne haþ nat al forzetten it selfe. but it wiþholdeþ þe

4643 somme of þinges and lesiþ þe singularites. þan who so  
þat sekeþ sopenesse. he nis in neiþer nouþir habit. for  
he not nat alle ne he ne haþ nat alle for-zeten. ¶ But  
zitte hym remembriþ þe somme of þinges þat he wiþ-  
holdeþ and axeþ counseil and tretip depelyche þinges  
ysein byforne. [*Glosa*] þat is to sein þe grete somme in  
hys mynde. [*textus*] so þat he mowe adden þe parties  
þat he haþ forzetten. to pilke þat he haþ wiþholden.

4635 *what*-MS. þat, C. what  
4635 *vnknowynge*-vnkunnynge  
4639 *eueryche*-euerych  
4640 *whil*-whil  
4640 *þe*-MS. þe þe  
4640 *hidd*-MS. hidde, C. hidde  
4641 *derknesse*-derkenesse  
4642 *haþ*-MS. haþe

*selfe*-self  
4644 *nouþir habit*-nother  
4644 *habite*  
4645 *alle* (both)-al  
4645 *haþ*-MS. haþe  
4648 [*Glosa*]-from C.  
4649 [*textus*]-from C.  
4650 *haþ* (both)-MS. haþe

## TAMEN ILLA UETUS INQUIT HEC EST.

**P**anne seide she. þis is quod she þe olde questioun of  
þe purueaunce of god. and marcus tulius whan he  
deuided[e] þe deuinaciouns. þat is to sein in hys booke  
þat he wroot of deuinaciouns. he moeued[e] gretly þis  
questioun. and þou þi self hast souzt it mochel and  
outerly and long[e]. but ȝit ne haþ it nat ben determined  
ne yspedd fermely and diligently of any of yow.  
¶ And þe cause of þis derkenesse and [of this] difficulte  
is for þat þe moeynge of þe resoun of mankynde ne  
may nat moeuen to. þat is to sein applien or ioynen to  
þe simplicitie of þe deuyne prescience. ¶ þe whiche  
symplicitie of þe deuyne prescience ȝif þat men [myhten  
thinken it in any manere / þat is to seyn / þat yif men] myzte  
pinken and comprehenden þe þinges as god seep hem.  
þan ne sholde þer dwellen outerly no doute. þe whiche  
resoun and cause of difficulte I shal assaie at þe laste  
to shewen and to speden. ¶ whan I haue \*firste  
[yspendyd / and] answered to þo resouns by whiche þou  
art ymoewed. ¶ For I axe whi þou wenest þat þilk[e]  
resouns of hem þat assoilen þis questioun ne ben nat  
spedeful ynouȝ ne sufficient þe whiche solucioun or þe  
whiche resoun for þat it demip þat þe prescience nis nat  
cause of necessite to þinges to comen. þan ne wenep it  
nat þat fredom of wille be distourbed or ylett by pre-  
science. for ne drawest þou nat argumentes from ellys  
where of þe necessite of þinges to comen. As who seip  
any oþer wey þan þus. but þat þilke þinge[s] þat þe pre-  
science woot byforn [ne] mowen nat vnbitide. þat is to  
seyn þat þei moten bitide. ¶ But þan yif þat prescience  
ne putteþ no necessite to þinges to comen. as þou þi self

[The 4<sup>th</sup> prose.]  
P. This is the  
old objection  
against Provid-  
ence, so ably  
handled by Cicero  
in his *Book of  
Divination*; and  
you yourself have  
anxiously dis-  
cussed it. But  
neither of you  
have offered a  
satisfactory solu-  
tion of the  
difficulty.  
The cause of this  
mystery is that  
the human un-  
derstanding can-  
not conceive the  
simplicity of the  
divine prescience,  
for if it were pos-  
sible to compre-  
hend this, every  
difficulty would  
at once disappear.  
I shall, therefore,  
try to explain and  
solve this difficult

question. I ask,  
then, why you do  
not approve the  
[\* fol. 36 b.]  
reasoning of such  
as think—that  
Prescience does  
not obstruct the  
liberty of the will,  
because it is not  
the necessitating  
cause of future  
events? Do you  
draw an argu-  
ment of the ne-  
cessity of future  
events, from any  
other topic than  
this,—that those  
things which are  
foreknown must  
of necessity  
happen? If  
divine prescience  
impose no neces-  
sity upon future  
things, must not  
the issue of things  
be voluntary, and  
man's will free  
and uncon-  
strained?

4653 *deuided[e]*—deuynede  
booke—book  
4654 *moeued[e]*—moeyuede  
4655 *souzt*—I-sowht  
4656 *long[e]*—longe  
haþ—MS. haþe  
4657 *yspedd*—MS. yspedde.  
C. Isped  
fermely—MS. feruently,

C. fermely  
4659 *derkenesse*—dirknesse  
[of this]—from C.  
4662-3 [myhten — men] —  
from C.  
4663 *myzte*—myhten  
4667 *firste*—fyrst  
4668 [yspendyd and]—from  
C.

4668 po—the  
whiche—which  
4669 art—MS. arte  
þilk[e]—þilke  
4671 *spedeful*—spedful  
4672 *whiche*—which  
4674 *wille*—wyl  
4677 *þinge[s]*—þinghes

For argument sake let us suppose there is no prescience, would, then, the events which proceed from free-will alone be under the power of necessity?

B. No.

P. Let us, then, admit Prescience, but that it imposes no necessity on what is to happen; the freedom of the will would still remain entire and absolute. But although Prescience, you may say, is not the necessary cause of future events, yet it is a sign that they shall necessarily happen, and hence it follows that, although there

4695

were no prescience, future events would still be an inevitable necessity. For the sign of a thing is not really the thing itself, but only points out what the individual is. Wherefore, it must be first proved that everything happens by necessity before we can conclude that prescience is a sign of that necessity. For if there be no necessity, prescience cannot be the sign of that which has no existence. The assertion that nothing happens but by necessity, must be proved by arguments drawn from causes connected and agreeing with this necessity, and not from signs or foreign causes.

hast confessed it *and* byknowen a litel her byforne. ¶ what cause [or what] is it. as who seiþ þere may no cause be. by whiche þat þe endes (exitus) uoluntarie of þinges myȝten be constreyned to certeyne bitydyng. ¶ For by grace of possessioun. so þat þou mowe þe better vnderstonde þis þat folweþ. ¶ I pose (impossibile) þat þer ne be no prescience. þan axe I quod she in as moche as appertenip to þat. sholde þan þinges þat comen of frewille ben constreined to bytiden by necessite. Boicius. nay quod I. þan azeinward quod she. I suppose þat þere be prescience. but þat ne putteþ no necessite to þinges. þan trowe I þat þilk self freedom of wille shal dwellen al hool *and* absolut *and* vnbounen. but þou wolt sein þat al be it so þat prescience nis nat cause of þe necessite of bitidyng to þinges to comen. ¶ Algate ȝitte it is a signe þat þe þinges ben to bytiden by necessite. by þis manere þan al þouȝ þe prescience ne hadde neuer yben. ȝit algate or at þe lest[e] wey. it is certeyne þing þat þe endys *and* þe bitydynges of þinges to comen sholde ben necessariē. ¶ For euery sygne sheweþ *and* signifieþ onely what þe þing is. ¶ but it ne makip nat þe þing þat it signifieþ. ¶ For whiche it byhoueþ firste to shewen þat no þing ne bitidip [þat it ne bytydith] by necessite. so þat it may apere þat þe prescience is signe of þis necessite. ¶ or ellys yif þere nere no necessite. certys þilke prescience ne myȝt[e] nat ben signe of þinge þat nis nat. ¶ But certys it is nowe certeyne þat þe preue of þis sustenip by stedfast resoun ne shal nat ben ladd ne proued by signes ne by argumentys ytaken fro wiþ oute. but by causes couenable *and* necessariē. ¶ But þou mayst sein how may it be þat þe þinges ne bitiden nat

4683 *whiche*—which  
4695 *better*—betere  
4693 *moche*—mochel  
4699 *frewille*—free wyl  
4691 *þat ne*—þat is ne  
4692 *þat*—MS. þan  
þilk self—þilke selue

4693 *wille*—wil  
4699 *lest[e]*—leaste  
4700 *sholde*—sholden  
4703 *whiche*—which  
firste—fyrst  
4703 [þat — bytydith] —  
from C.

4707 *myȝt[e]*—myhte  
þinge—thing  
4708 *nowe*—now  
4709 *sustenip*—ysustenyd  
stedfast—stydefast  
ladd—MS. ladde, C. lad



þat ben ypurueyed to comen. but certys ryȝt as we  
trowen þat þo þinges whiche þat þe purueaunce woot by-  
forn to comen. ne ben nat to bitiden. but [þat] ne sholde  
we nat demen. but raþer al þouȝ [þat] þei schal bitiden.  
ȝit ne haue þei no necessite of hire kynde to bitiden.  
and þis maist þou lyȝtly aperceyuen by þis þat I shal  
seyn. but we seen many þinges whan þei ben don by-  
forn oure eyen ryȝt as men seen þe karter worken in þe  
tourneyng and in attempryng or in adressing of hys  
kartes or chariottes. ¶ and by þis manere as who seiþ  
mayst þou vnderstonde of alle manere opir werkemen.  
¶ Is þere þanne any necessite as who seiþ in oure lok-  
yng [þat] constreineþ or compelliþ any of þilke þinges  
to ben don so. b. nay quod I. ¶ For in ydel and in  
veyne were alle þe effect of crafte yif þat alle þinges  
weren moeued by constreynyng. þat is to seyn by con-  
streynyng of oure eyen or of oure syȝt. P. þise þingus  
þan quod she þat whan men don hem ne han non  
necessite þat men don hem. eke þo same þinges first or  
þei be don. þei ben to comen wiþ out necessite. for whi  
þer ben somme þinges to bytide of whiche þe endys  
and þe bitidynges of hem ben absolut \*and quit of alle  
necessite. for certys I ne trowe nat þat any man wolde seyn  
þis. þat þo þinges þat men don now þat þei ne weren  
to bitiden. first or þei were ydon ¶ and þilk same  
þinges al þouȝ þat men hadden ywyst hem by-forn.  
ȝitte þei han fre bitidynges. for ryȝt as science of  
þinges present ne bryngeþ in no necessite to þinges  
[þat men doon // Ryȝt so the prescience of thinges to  
comen ne bryngeth in no necessite to thinges] to bytiden  
but þou mayst seyn þat of þilke same it is ydouted. as  
wheper þat of þilke þinges þat ne han non endes and

We see many things when they are done before our eyes; such as a charioteer driving his chariot, and other things of like nature. Now, is there any necessity which compels these things to be done? B. No. For if all things were moved by compulsion—the efforts of art would be vain and fruitless.

P. The things, then, which are done are under no necessity that they should be done; then first before they were done, they were under no necessity of coming to pass; wherefore some things happen, the event of which is unconstrained by necessity.

These things therefore, although fore-known, have free events: for as the knowledge

4731 of present things imposes no necessity upon things which are now done, so

[\* fol. 37.] neither does the foreknowledge of futurities necessitate the things which are to come. But you may doubt whether there can be any certain prescience of things, of which the event is not necessitated: for here there seems to be an evident contradiction. If things are fore-known, you may contend they must necessarily happen; and if their event is not necessary,

4714 *whiche*—which

4715 [þat]—from C.

*sholdo*—sholden4716 *demen*—MS. denyen

[þat]—from C.

4717 *necessite*—MS. necessari-4721 *hys*—hise

4725 [þat]—from C.

4727 *veyne*—veyn*alle*—al*crafte*—craft (the4729 *þise*—MS. þise þise, C.4732 *wiþ out*—with-owte4733 *bytide*—bytyden4733 *whiche*—which4737 *were*—weeren [I-doon*ydon*—MS. ydone, C.*þilk*—þilke4741-2 [þat — *thinges*] —

from C.

4744 *endes*—issues



they cannot be foreseen, because true knowledge can comprehend nothing but what is absolutely certain. And if things uncertain in their events are foreseen as certain, this knowledge is nothing more than a false opinion. For it is very remote from true knowledge to judge of things otherwise than they really are. The cause of this error is that men imagine that their knowledge is wholly derived from the nature of the things known, whereas it is quite the reverse. Things are not known from their inherent properties, but by the faculties of the observer.

4761

The roundness of a body affects the sight in one way, and the touch in another. The eye, from afar, darts its rays upon the object, and by beholding it comprehends its form. But the object is not distinguished by the touch unless the hand comes in contact with it and feels it all round. Man himself is surveyed in divers ways—by the senses, by the imagination, by reason, and by the intelligence (of the Deity). The senses take note of his material figure—the imagination considers the form alone, exclusive of the matter.

bytidynges necessaryes yif þer-of may ben any pre-science ¶ For certys þei seme to discorde. for þou wenest þat yif þat þinges ben yseyn byform þat necessite folweþ hem. and yif (*et putas*) necessite faileþ hem þei ne myzten nat ben wist byform. and þat no þinge ne may ben comprehendid by science but certeyne. and yif þo þinges þat ne han no certeyne bytidynges ben ypuruoied as certeyn. it sholde ben dirkenesse of oppinioun nat soþefastnesse of science [*and þou weenyst þat it be diuerse fro the hoolnesse of science / þat any man sholde deme a thing to ben oother weys thanne it is it self*]. and þe cause of þis errour is. þat of alle þe þinges þat euery wyzt haþ yknowe. þei wenen þat þo þinges ben y-knowe al oonly by þe strengþe and by þe nature of þe þinges þat ben ywyst or yknowe. and it is al þe contraria. for alle þat euere is yknowe. it is rapþer comprehendid and yknownen nat after his strengþe and hys nature. but after þe faculte þat is to seyn þe power and [the] nature of hem þat knownen. and for þat þis shal mowe shewen by a short ensample þe same roundenes of a body .O. oþer weyes þe syzt of þe eye knoweþ it. and oþer weyes þe touching. þe lokinge by castynge of his bemes waiteþ and seep fro afer alle þe body to-gider wiþ oute mouynge of it self. but þe touchinge cliuþ and conioigneþ to þe rounde body (*orbi*) and moueþ abouten þe environynge. and comprehendþ by parties þe roundenesse. ¶ and þe man hym self oþer weies wyt byholdþ hym. and oþerweyes ymaginacioun and oþer weyes resoun. and oþer weyes intelligence. ¶ For þe wit comprehendþ fro wiþ outen furþe þe figure of þe body of þe man. þat is establisshed in þe matere subiect. But þe ymaginacioun [*comprehendith only the figure with owte the matere /*

4746 *seme*—semyn  
4748 *discorde*—discorden  
4749 *þat*—yif  
4753-5 [*and*—*self*]—from C.  
4757 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
4760 *alle*—al

4763 *mowe*—mowen  
4764 *roundenes* — Rownd-  
nesse  
4765 *syzt*—sihte  
4767 *alle*—al  
4769 *abouten*—abowte  
4770 *roundnesse* — Rownd-

nesse  
4774 *fro wiþ outen furþe*—  
with owte forth  
4776-7 [*comprehendith* —  
*ymaginacioun*—]—from C.

Resoun surmounteth ymaginacioun] and comprehendē by an vniuersel lokynge þe commune spece (speciem) þat is in þe singuler peces. ¶ But þe eye of intelligence is heyzer for it surmountēþ þe enviroynynge of þe vniuersite and lookeþ ouer þat by pure subtilite of þouzt. þilk same symple forme of man þat is perdurably in þe deuyne þouzt. in whiche þis auzt[e] gretely to ben considered þat þe heyest strengþe to comprehendē þinges enbraceþ and conteyneþ þe lower[e] strengþe [but the lowere strengthe ne arysith nat in no manere to heyere strengthe]. for wit ne may no þinge comprehendē oute of matere. ne þe ymagynacioun ne lokeþ nat þe vniuerseles spesces. ne resoun ne takeþ nat þe symple forme. so as intelligence takeþ it. but þe intelligence þat lokeþ al abouen whan it haþ comprehendid þe forme it knoweþ and demēþ alle þe þinges þat ben vndir þat forme. but she knoweþ hem vndir þilke manere in þe whiche it comprehendid þilke same symple forme þat ne may neuer be knowen to non of þat oper. þat is to seyn to non of þe þre forseide strengþes of þe soule. for it knoweþ þe vniuersite of resoun and þe figure of þe ymaginacioun. and þe sensible material conseiued. and þou wenest þat it be diuerse fro þe hoolnesse of science. þat any man sholde deme a þing to ben operweyes þan it is it self and þe cause of þis errour etc'. vt supra. by wit. ne it ne vseþ nat nor of resoun ne of ymaginacioun ne of wit wiþ oute forþe but it byholdeþ alle þinges so as I shal seye. by a strok of þouzt formely wiþ oute discours or collacioun ¶ Certys resoun whan it lokeþ any þing vniuersel it ne vseþ nat of ymaginacioun nor of wit and algates ȝit [it] comprehendid þe þinges ymaginable and sensible. for resoun is she þat \*diffinisseþ þe vniuersel

Reason transcends the imaginations, and examining existences in general discovers the particular species, but the eye of Intelligence soars still higher; for, going beyond the bounds of what is general, it surveys the simple forms themselves, by its own pure and subtle thought: in which this is chiefly to be considered, that the higher power of perception embraces the lower; but the inferior cannot attain to the energy of the superior: for the senses cannot go beyond the perception of matter; the imagination cannot comprehend existences in general, nor can the reason conceive the simple form. But the Intelligence looking down (as from 4794

above) and having conceived the form, discerns all things that are below it, and comprehends what does not fall within the reach of the other faculties of the mind. Without the aid of those faculties Intelligence comprehends things formally (i. e. by beholding their simple forms) by one effort of mind. Reason, without the aid of Imagination and Sense, in considering things in general, comprehends all imaginable and sensible things. For instance, reason defines her general conceptions thus:—  
[\* fol. 37 b.]

4777 comprehendē — MS. comprehendynge  
4778 an—omitted  
4780 heyzer—heyere  
4783 whiche—which  
4784 heyest—heyiste

4785 lower[e]—lowere  
4785-7 [but — strengthe]—  
from C.  
4787 wit—witte  
4787 oute—owt  
4791 haþ—MS. haþe  
4793 whiche—which

4795-6 non—none  
4796 strengþes—things  
4798-4801 and þou—vt supra—omitted  
4805 collacioun—MS. callacioun, C. collacioun  
4806 wit—witte

Man is a rational two-footed animal, which, though it be a general idea, yet every one knows that man thus defined is perceived both by the imagination and the senses, notwithstanding that in this instance reason does not make use of imagination or the senses, but of her own rational conception. The imagination also, although it derives its power of seeing and forming figures from the senses, yet in the absence and without the use of the senses it considers and comprehends all sensible things by its own imaginative power. Do not you see that

4824

men attain to the knowledge of things more by their own faculties, than by the inherent property of things?

[The 4th Metur.] Nor is it unreasonable that it should be so—for since every judgment is the act of the person judging; every one must needs do his own work by the help of his own faculties, and not by the aid of foreign power.

Fallacious and obscure was the lore of the Stoics, who taught that images of things obvious to the senses were imprinted on the mind by external objects, and that the soul is at first like a mirror or a clean parchment, free from figures and letters.

of hir conseite ryzt þus. ¶ Man is a resonable t[w]o-footid beest. and how so þat þis knowynge [is] vniuersel. 3it nys þer no wyzt þat ne woot wel. þat a man is [a thing] ymaginable and sensible ¶ and þis same considereþ wel resoun. but þat nis nat by ymaginacioun. nor by witte. but it lokip it by [a] resonable concepcioun. ¶ Also ymaginacioun al be it so. þat it takeþ of wit þe bygynyngus to seen and to formen þe figures. algates al þou3 þat wit ne ware not present. 3it it envirouniþ and comprehendip alle þinges sensible. nat by resoun sensible of demynge. but by resoun ymaginatif. ¶ sest þou nat þan þat alle þe þinges in knowynge vsen more of hir faculte or of hir power. þan þei don of [the] faculte or of power of þinges þat ben yknowen. ne þat nis no wronge. for so as euery iugement is þe dede or þe doynge of hym þat demeþ. It byhoueþ þat euery wyzt performe þe werke and hys entencioun nat of forein power! but of hys propre power.

## QUONDAM PORTICUS ATTULIT.

þE porche þat is to sein a gate of þe toune of athenis þer as philosophres hadde hir congregacioun to dispoiten. and þilke porche brouzt[e] somtyme olde men ful derke in hire sentences. þat is to sein philosophers þat hyztenstoiciens. þat wenden þat ymages [and] sensibilites þat is to sein sensible ymaginaciouns. or ellys ymaginacioun of sensible þinges weren inprentid in to soules fro bodies wip oute forþe. ¶ As who seiþ þat þilke stoiciens wenden þat þe soule hadde ben naked of it self. as a mirour or a clene parchemyn. so þat alle figures mosten [fyrst] comen fro þinges fro wip oute in to soules. and ben inprentid in to soules. *Textus.* Ryzt as we ben wont some tyme by a swift poyntel to ficchen lettres emprentid in þe smopenesse or in þe plainesse of

4810 [is]—from C.

4813 witte—wit

4821 don—MS. done, C. doon

[the]—from C.

4822 yknowen—I knowe

4823 no wronge—nat wrong

4824 werke—werk

4825 forein—foreyne

4827 hadde—hadden

dispoiten—desputen

4828 brouzt[e]—browhte

4830 [and]—from C.

4837 inprentid—aprentyd

4838 some tyme—somytyme

swift—swyfte

þe table of wex. or in parchemyn þat ne haþ no figure  
[ne] note in it. *Glosa.* But now arguiþ boece azeins þat  
oppinioun and seiþ þus. but yif þe þriuyng soule ne  
vnplitiþ no þing. þat is to sein ne doþ no þing by hys  
propre moeuynges. but suffriþ and lieþ subgit to þe  
figures and to þe notes of bodyes wiþ oute forþe. and  
3eldeþ ymages ydel and veyne in þe manere of a  
mirour. whennes þriueþ þan or whennes comeþ þan  
þilke knowyng in oure soule. þat discerniþ and by-  
holdeþ alle þinges. and whennes is þilke strengþe þat  
byholdeþ þe syngulere þinges. or whennes is þe strengþe  
þat dyuydeþ þinges yknowe. and þilke strengþe þat  
gadereþ to-gidre þe þinges deuided. and þe strengþe þat  
cheseþ hys entrechaunged wey. for som tyme it heueþ  
vp þe heued. þat is to sein þat it heueþ vp þe enten-  
cioun to ryzt heye þinges. and som tyme it discendiþ in  
to ryzt lowe þinges. and whan it retourniþ in to hym  
self. it repreuiþ and destroiþ þe false þinges by þe  
trewe þinges. ¶ Certys þis strengþe is cause more  
efficient and mochel more myzty to seen and to knowe  
þinges. þan þilke cause þat suffriþ and resceyueþ þe  
notes and þe figures inpressed in manere of matere al-  
gates þe passioun þat is to seyn þe suffraunce or þe wit  
in þe quik[e] body goþ byforne excitynge and moe-  
uyng þe strengþes of þe þouzte. ryzt so as whan þat  
clerenesse smyteþ þe eyen and moeuiþ hem to seen. or  
ryzt so as voys or sounne hurtliþ to þe eres and com-  
moeuiþ hem to herkne. þan is þe strengþe of þe þouzt  
ymoeuid and excitid and clepeþ furþe þe semblable  
moeuynges þe speces þat it halt wiþ inne it self. and  
addiþ þo speces to þe notes and to þe þinges wiþ out  
forþe. and medeleþ þe ymages of þinges wiþ out forþe  
to þe forme[s] yhid wiþ inne hym self.

But if the mind is  
passive in receiv-  
ing the impres-  
sions of outward  
objects, whence  
proceeds the  
knowledge by  
which the mind  
comprehends all  
things?

4845

Whence its force  
to conceive indi-  
vidual existences,  
to separate those  
things when  
known, to unite  
divided things,  
and to choose and  
change its path,  
soaring to the  
highest and de-  
scending to the  
lowest things—  
and returning to  
itself, to confute  
false things by  
the true?

4854

This cause is  
more efficacious  
and powerful to  
see and to know  
things, than that  
cause which re-  
ceives the char-  
acters impressed  
like servile  
matter.

4860

Yet the sense in  
the living body  
excites and moves  
the mental  
powers; as when  
the light striking  
the eyes causes  
them to see, or as  
the voice rushing  
into the ear ex-  
cites hearing.

4866

Then is the force  
of thought ex-  
cited; it calls  
forth the images  
within itself, and  
adds to them the  
outward forms,  
blending external  
images with the  
counterparts con-  
cealed within.

4872

4840 *hab*—MS. *habe*  
4843 *vnplitiþ*—vnpleyteth  
doþ—MS. *dope*  
4845 *þe*—tho  
4863 *quik[e]*—qwyke

4863 *goþ*—MS. *goþe*  
4864 *þouzte*—thoght  
4865 *clerenesse*—cleeruesse  
4866 *sounne*—sown  
4868 *furþe*—forth

4870 *out*—owte  
4871 *out forþe*—owte forth  
4872 *forme[s]*—formes  
*yhid*—I-adde

## QUOD SI IN CORPORIBUS SENCIENDIS.

[\* fol. 38.]

\*QUESTIO.

[The 5<sup>th</sup> prose.]  
Although there are in objects certain qualities which strike externally upon the senses, and put their instruments in motion; although the passive impression upon the body precedes the action of the mind, and although the former rouses the latter to action, yet if in the perception of bodily things, the soul is not by the impression of external things made to know these things, but by its own power judgeth of these bodily impres-

4885 sions, how much more shall those pure spiritual beings (as God or angels) discern things by an act of their understanding alone, without the aid of impressions from external objects? For this reason, then, there are several sorts of knowing distributed among various beings. For sense (or sensation) destitute of all other knowledge is allotted to those creatures that have no motion, as shell-fish. But imagination is given to such brutes capable of motion, and having in some degree the power of desiring or refusing. Reason, however, is the attribute of man alone, as Intelligence is that of God.

4902 is more worþe þan [th]is[e] oþer. syn it knoweþ by hys

But what [yif] þat in bodies to ben feelid þat is to sein in þe takynge of knowelechinge of bodyly þinges. and al be it so þat þe qualites of bodies þat ben obiect fro wip oute forþe moeuen and entalenten þe instrumentes of þe wittes. and al be it so þat þe passioun of þe body þat is to seyn þe witte [or the] suffraunce [goth to-form the strengthe of the workynge corage / the which passioun or suffraunce] clepiþ furþe þe dede of þe þouzt in hym self. and moeueþ and exiteþ in þis mene while þe formes þat resten wip in forþe. and yif þat in sensible bodies as I haue seid oure corage nis nat ytauzt or enprentid by passioun to knowe þise þinges. but demip and knoweþ of hys owen strengþe þe passioun or suffraunce subiect to þe body. Moche more þan þoo þinges þat ben absolut and quit fram alle talentz or affeccions of bodies. as god or hys aungels ne folwen nat in discernynge þinges obiect from wip oute forþe. but þei accomplissen and speden þe dede of hir þouzt by þis resoun. ¶ Þan þere comen many manere knowynges to dyuerse and differyng substaunces. for þe wit of þe body þe whiche witte is naked and despoyled of alle oþer knowynges. þilke witte comeþ to bestes þat ne mowen nat moeuen hem self here ne þere. as oystres and muscles and oþer swiche shelle fysshe of þe see. þat cliuen and ben norissed to roches. but þe ymaginacioun comeþ to remuable bestes þat semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any þinge. but resoun is al only to þe lynage of mankynde ryzt as intelligence is oonly þe deuyne nature. of whiche it folweþ þat þilke knowyng

4973 [yif]—from C.  
4978 [or the]—from C.  
suffraunce — MS. suffraunce, C. suffraunce  
4979-80 [goth]—suffraunce  
—from C.

4883 seid—MS. seide, C. seyð  
4887 quit—quite  
4888 hys—hise  
4889 discernynge—MS. discernyng, C. discernynge  
from—fro

4893-94 witte—wit  
4895 mowen—mowe  
here ne þere—her and thor  
4901 whiche—which  
4902 [th]is[e] oþer — thise  
oother



propre nature nat only hys subiect. as who seip it ne knoweþ nat al oonly þat apperteinþ proprely to hys knowynge. but it knoweþ þe subgitz of alle oþer knowynges. but how shal it þan be yif þat wit *and* ymaginacioun stryuen azeins resonyng *and* sein þat of pilke vniuersel þinges. þat resoun wenep to seen þat it nis ryzt nauzt. for wit *and* ymaginacioun seyn þat þat. þat is sensible or ymaginable it ne may nat ben vniuersel. þan is eiper þe iugement of resoun [soth]. ne þat þer nis no þinge sensible. or ellys for þat resoun woot wel þat many þinges ben subiect to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. þan is þe consepcioun of resoun veyn *and* fals whiche þat lookeþ *and* comprehendþ. þat þat is sensible *and* synguler as uniuersele. and ȝif þat resoun wolde answeren azein to þise two þat is to sein to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. *and* sein þat soþely she hir self. þat is to seyn þat resoun lokeþ *and* comprehendþ by resoun of vniuersalite. boþe þat þat is sensible *and* þat þat is ymaginable. *and* þat pilke two þat is to seyn wit *and* ymaginacioun ne mowen nat strecchen ne enhaunsen hem self to knowynge of vniuersalite for þat þe knowyng of hem ne may exceden nor sourmounten þe bodyly figure[s]. ¶ Certys of þe knowyng of þinges men auȝten raþer ȝeue credence to þe more stedfast *and* to þe more perfit iugement. In þis manere stryuyng þan we þat han strengþe of resonyng *and* of ymaginyng *and* of wit þat is to seyn by resoun *and* by ymaginacioun *and* by wit. [and] we sholde raþer preise þe cause of resoun. as who seip þan þe cause of wit or ymaginacioun. semblable þinge is it þat þe resoun of mankynde ne wenep nat þat þe deuyne intelligence byholdeþ or knoweþ þinges to comen. but ryzt as þe resoun of mankynde knoweþ hem. for þou arguist *and* seist þus. þat

Hence His (i. e. God's) knowledge exceeds all other, comprehending both what belongs to His own nature, and what is comprehended by all inferior creatures. But how shall it be then, if sense and imagination oppose reason, affirming that the general idea of things, which reason thinks it so perfectly sees, is nothing? For what falls under the cognisance of the senses and imagination cannot be general. But if reason should answer to this—that in her idea of what is general she comprehends whatever is sensible and imaginable; but as to the senses and imagination, they cannot attain to the knowledge of what is general, since their know-

4921 ledge is confined to material figures; and therefore in all real knowledge of things we must give the greatest credit to that faculty which has a more steadfast and perfect judgment of things. In a controversy of this kind ought not we, who possess faculties of reason, &c., to side with reason and espouse her cause? The case is entirely similar when human reason thinks the Divine Intelligence cannot behold future events in any other way than she herself is capable of perceiving them. For thus you argue —

4907 *azeins*—ayein4908 *vniuersel*—vniuersels

4911 [soth]—from C.

4914 *fals whiche*—false which4917 *wit*—witte4918 *soþely*—soothly4923 *knowynge*—knowy4926 *ȝeue*—yeuen4926 *stedfast*—stidefast

4930 [and]—from C.

4931 *or*—and of

What things are not necessitated cannot be fore-known; therefore there is no prescience of these things, for, if there were, everything would be fixed by an absolute necessity. If it were possible to enjoy the intelligence of [\* fol. 38 b.] the Deity, we should then deem it right that

4944 sense and imagination should yield to reason, and also judge it proper that human reason should submit to the Divine Intelligence. Let us, therefore, strive to elevate ourselves to the height of the supreme intelligence—there shall reason see what she cannot discover in herself; and that is in what manner the prescience of God sees and defines all things; although they have no certain event; and she will see that this is no mere conjecture, but rather simple, supreme, and unlimited knowledge.

[The 5th Metur.] Various are the shapes of created beings. Some creep along the ground and trace the dust in furrows as they go; others with nimble wings float through the air; some with their feet impress the ground, or tread lightly o'er the meads, or seek the shady grove.

4938 [ther]—from C.  
4939 trowen—trowe  
4942 parsoners—parsoneres  
4945 mans—mannes  
4946 auȝ[e]—owte  
4947 whiche—which  
4949 þat yif—yif þat

yif it ne seme nat to men þat somme þinges han certeyne and necessarie bytidynges. þei ne mowen nat ben wist byforn certeynely to bytiden. þan nis [ther] no prescience of pilke þinges. and yif we trowen þat prescience ben in þise þinges. þan is þer no þinge þat it ne bitidiþ by necessite. but certys yif we myȝten han þe iugement of þe deuyne þouȝt as we \*ben parsoners of resoun. ryȝt so as we han demed. it byhoueþ þat ymaginacioun and wit ben byneþe resoun. ryȝt so wolde we demen þat it were ryȝtful þing þat mans resoun auȝt[e] to summitten it self and to ben byneþe þe deuyne þouȝt. for whiche þat yif we mowen. as who seiþ. þat yif þat we mowen I conseil[e] þat we enhanse vs in to þe heyȝt of pilke souereyne intelligence. for þere shal resoun wel seen þat þat it ne may nat by-holden in it self. and certys þat is þis in what manere þe prescience of god seep alle þinges certains and difinissed al þouȝ þei ne han no certein issues or by-tydynges. ne þis is non oppinioun but it is rapier þe simplicite of þe souereyn science þat nis nat enclosed nor yshet wiþinneno boundes.

## QUAM VARIIS FIGURIS.

þE bestes passen by þe erþes by ful dyuerse figures for somme of hem han hir bodies strauȝt and crepen in þe dust and drawn after hem a traiz or a forȝe contynued. þat is to sein as addres or snakes. and oþer bestes by [the] wandryng lyȝtnesse of hir wenges beten þe wyndes and ouer-swymmen þe spaces of þe longe eyer by moist flee[y]nge. and oþer bestes gladen hem to diggen her traas or her stappes in þe erþe wiþ hir goynges or wiþ her feet. or to gone eyþe[r] 4965 by þe grene feldes or [elles] to walken vnder þe wodes.

4940 heyȝt—heihte  
pere—ther  
4952 þouȝ—MS. þouȝt  
4955 no—none  
4957 somme—som  
4959 furge contynued—  
forwþ lkonntynued

4959 addres—nadriz  
4960 [the]—from C.  
4963 hem—hem self  
stappes—steppis  
4964 or to gone—and to gon  
eyþe[r]—eyther  
4965 [elles]—from C.

and al be it so þat þou seest þat þei alle discorden by dyuerse formes. algate hire [faces] enclini[n]g heuieþ hire dulle wittes. Onlyche þe lynage of man heueþ heyest hys heyze heued and stondeþ lyzt wiþ hys vpryt body and byholdeþ þe erþe vndir hym. [and] but-ȝif þou erþely man wexest yuel oute of þi witte. þis figure amonesteþ þe þat axest þe heuene wiþ þi ryzt[e] visage. and hast areised þi forhede to beren vp on heye þi corage so þat þi þouȝt ne be nat yheuied ne put lowe vndir foot. sen þat þi body is so heye areised.

4975

## PROSA VLTIMA.

## QUONIAM IGITUR UTI PAULO ANTE.

**H**Erfore þan as I haue shewed a litel her byforne þat al pinge þat is ywist nis nat knowen by hys nature propre. but by þe nature of hem þat comprehendē it. ¶ Lat vs loke now in as moche as it is leueful to vs. as who seiþ lat vs loken now as we mowen whiche þat þe estat is of þe deuyne substaunce so þat we mowen [ek] knowen what his science is. þe comune iugement of alle creatures resonables þan is þis þat god is eterne. lat vs considere þan what is eternite. For certys þat shal shewen vs to-gidre þe deuyne nature and þe deuyne science ¶ Eternite þan is perfit possessioun and al togidre of lijf interminable and þat sheweþ more clerely by þe comparisoun or collacioun of temporel pinges. for al ping þat lyueþ in tyme it is present and procediþ fro preteritȝ in to futures. þat is to sein. fro tyme passed in to tyme comynge. ne þer nis no ping establissed in tyme þat may enbracen to-gidre al þe space of hys lijf. for certys ȝit ne haþ it nat taken þe tyme of þe morwe. and it haþ lost þat of ȝister-day. and certys in þe lijf

Though we see an endless variety of forms, yet all are prone to the earth they bend their looks, increasing the heaviness of their dull sense. Man alone doth raise aloft his noble head; light and erect he spurns the earth. Thou art admonished by this figure then, unless by sense deceived, that whilst taught by thy lofty mien to look above, thou shouldst elevate thy mind lest it sink below its proper level. [The *de prose* and the *laste*.]

Since everything which is known is not, as I have shown, perceived by its own inherent properties, but by the faculties of those comprehending them, let us now examine the disposition of the Divine nature. All rational creatures agree in affirming that God is eternal. And eternity is a full, total, and perfect possession of a life which shall never end. This will appear more clearly from a comparison with temporal things. Temporal existence proceeds from the past to the present, and thence to the future. And there is nothing under the law of time, which can at once comprehend the whole space of its existence. Having lost *yesterday* it does not as yet enjoy *to-morrow*; and as for *to-day* it consists only in the present transitory moment.

4967 [faces]—from C.  
algate—algates  
enclini[n]g—enclynyd  
4968 Onlyche—Only  
heyest—heyste  
4970 erþe—erthes  
4971 oute—owt  
witte—wit

4972 ryzt[e]—ryhte  
hast—MS. haþe, C. hast  
4973 forhede—foreheuyd  
on heye—a heygh  
4974 foot sen—foote syn  
4977 al pinges—alle thinges  
4979 moche—moche  
4980 loken—loke

4980 whiche—which  
4981 [ek]—from C.  
4987 clerely—cleerly  
4989 al—allo  
4993-4 haþ—MS. haþe  
4993 þe (2)—to  
4994 þat—the tyme



Whatever, therefore, is subjected to a temporal condition, as Aristotle thought of the world, may be without beginning and without end; and although its duration may extend [\* fol. 39.] to an infinity of time, yet it cannot rightly be called eternal: for it doth not comprehend at once the whole extent of its infinite duration, having no knowledge of things future which are not yet arrived. For what is eternal must be always present to itself and master of itself, and have always with it the infinite succession of time. Therefore some philosophers, who had heard that

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Plato believed that this world had neither beginning nor end, falsely concluded, that the created universe was coeternal with its Creator. But it is one thing to be conducted through a life of infinite duration, which was Plato's opinion of the world, and another thing to comprehend at once the whole extent of this duration as present which, it is manifest, can only belong to the Divine mind. Nor ought it to seem to us that God is prior to and more ancient than his creatures by the space of

of þis day 3e ne lyuen no more but ryzt as in þis moeue-  
able *and* transitorie moment. þan pilke þinge þat suffrip  
temporel condicioun. a[l]þoughe þat [it] bygan neuer  
to be. ne þoughe it neuere cese forto be. as aristotle  
demde of þe worlde. and al þou3 þat þe lif of it be  
strecchid wiþ infinite of tyme. 3it al\*gates nis it no  
swiche þing þat men myzten trowen by ryzt þat it is  
eterne. for al þou3 þat it comprehende *and* embrace þe  
space of life infinite. 3it algates ne [em]braceþ it nat þe  
space of þe lif alto-gidre. for it ne haþ nat þe futures  
þat ne ben nat 3it. ne it ne haþ no lenger þe preterit3  
þat ben ydon or ypassed. but pilke þing þan þat haþ  
*and* comprehendip to-gidre alle þe plente of þe lif in-  
terminable. to whom þere ne failip nat of þe future.  
*and* to whom þer nis nat of þe preterit escapid nor  
ypassed. pilk[e] same is ywitnessed or yproued by ryzt  
to ben eterne. and it byhoueþ by necessite þat pilke  
þinge be alwey present to hym self *and* compotent. as  
who seiþ alwey present to hym self *and* so myzty þat al  
by ryzt at hys plesaunce. *and* þat he haue al present  
þe infinit of þe moeuable tyme. wherfore som men  
trowen wrongefully þat whan þei heren þat it semid[e]  
to plato þat þis worlde ne had[de] neuer bygynnyng  
of tyme. ne þat it neuere shal haue faylynge. þei wenen  
in þis manere þat þis worlde ben maked coeterne wiþ  
his makere. as who seiþ. þei wenen þat þis worlde *and*  
god ben maked to-gidre eterne. and it is a wrongful  
wenyng. for oper þing is it to ben yladd by lif in-  
terminable as plato graunted[e] to þe worlde. *and* oper  
þing is it to embracen to-gidre alle þe presence to þe lif  
interminable. þe whiche þing it is clere *and* manifest

4997 a[l]þoughe—al-thogh

[if]—from C.

4999 worlde—world

5001 swiche—swych

5002 eterne— from C., MS.

eternite

5003 life—lyf

5004-5-6 haþ—MS. haþe

5006 ydon—MS. ydone, C. I.

doon

5007 alle—al

5008-9 nat—nawht

5010 pilk[e]—thilke

or—and

5014 by—be

5016 semid[e]—semede

5017 worlde—world

had[de]—hadde

5018 haue—han

5019-20 worlde—world

5022 yladd—MS. yladde, C.

I-lad

5023 worlde—world

5024 embracen—embrace

alle—al

presence to—present of

5025 clere—cleer

þat it is *propre* to þe deuine þouzt. ne it ne sholde nat  
semen to vs þat god is elder þan þinges þat ben ymaked  
by quantite of tyme. but rap̃er by þe *proprete* of hys  
symple nature. for þis ilke infinit[e] moeuynge of temporel  
þinges folwip þis presentarie estat of þe lijf inmoeu-  
able. *and* so as it ne may nat contrefeten it ne feynen  
it ne ben euene lyke to it. for þe inmoeuablete. þat is  
to seyn þat is in þe eternite of god. ¶ it faileþ *and*  
falleþ in to moeuynge fro þe simplicitie of [the] pre-  
sence of god. *and* disenresip to þe infinite quantite of  
future *and* of preterit. *and* so as it ne may nat han to-  
gidre al þe plente of þe lif. algates ȝitte for as moche as  
it ne cesip neuere forto ben in som manere it semeþ  
somde[1] to vs þat it folwip *and* resemlip þilke þing  
þat it ne may nat attayne to. ne fulfille. *and* byndeþ it  
self to som manere presence of þis litel *and* swifte  
moment. þe whiche presence of þis lytele *and* swifte  
moment. for þat it bereþ a manere ymage or lykenesse  
of þe ay dwellynge presence of god. it graunteþ to  
swiche manere þinges as it bitidip to þat it semeþ hem  
þat þise þinges han ben *and* ben *and* for [þat] þe pre-  
sence of swiche litel moment ne may nat dwelle þer-for  
[it] rauyssid[e] *and* took þe infinit[e] wey of tyme. þat  
is to seyn by successioun. *and* by þis manere it is ydon.  
for þat it sholde continue þe lif in goyng of þe whiche  
lif it ne myzt[e] nat embrace þe plente in dwellynge.  
*and* for þi yif we willen putte worþi name[s] to þinges  
*and* folwen plato. lat vs seyn þan soþely þat god is  
eterne. *and* þat þe worlde is perpetuel. þan syn þat  
euery iugement knoweþ *and* comprehendip by hys owen  
nature þinges þat ben subiect vnto hym. þere is soþely  
al-wey to god an eterne *and* presentarie estat. *and* þe

time, but rather by the simple and undivided properties of his nature. The infinite progression of temporal things imitates the ever-present condition of an immovable life: and since it cannot copy nor equal it from an immovable and simply present state, it passes into motion and into an infinite measure of past and future time. But since it cannot possess at once the whole extent of its duration, yet, as it never ceases wholly to be, it faintly emulates that whose perfection it can neither attain nor express, by attaching itself to

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the present fleeting moment, which, because it resembles the durable present time, imparts to those things that partake of it an appearance of existence. But as it cannot stop or abide it pursues its course through infinite time, and by gliding along it continues its duration, the plenitude of which it could not comprehend, by abiding in a permanent state. If we would follow Plato in giving things their right names, let us say that God is eternal and the world perpetual. His knowledge, surpassing the progression of time, is ever present, containing the infinite space

5032 *lyke*—lyk  
5034 [*the*]*—*from C.  
5039 *somde*[1]*—*somdel  
5040 *fulfille**—*fullfyllen  
5041 *litel**—*fr. m C., MS. lykly  
5042 *whiche**—*which  
*lytele**—*from C., MS. lykly

5046 *ben* (1)*—*yben  
[*þat*]*—*from C.  
5047 *swiche**—*swych  
5048 [*it*]*—*from C.  
5051 *myzt*[e]*—*myhto  
5052 *willen putte**—*wollen  
putten

5052 *name*[s]*—*names  
5053 *soþely**—*sothly  
5054 *worlde**—*world  
5055 *owen**—*owne  
5056 *soþely**—*sothly  
5057 *al-wey**—*al-ways

of past and future times, and embrace in his clear insight all things, as if they were now transacting. Prescience is, then, a foreknowledge, not of what is to come, but of the present and *never-fading now* (in which God [\* fol. 80 b.] sees all things as if immovably present). Therefore *foreknowledge* is not so applicable a term as *providence*—for God looks down upon all things from the summit of the universe. Do you think that God imposes a necessity on things by beholding them? It is not so in human affairs. Does your view

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of an action lay any necessity upon it? B. No. P. By parity of reason it is clear that whilst you see only some things in a limited instant, God sees all things in his ever-present time. His Divine prescience therefore does not change the nature of things—but only beholds those things as present to him which shall in time be produced. Nor does he judge confusedly of them, but knows at one view what will necessarily and what will not necessarily happen.

The eye of God, seeing all things, doth not alter the properties of things, for everything is present to him, though its temporal event is future.

science of hym þat ouer-passeþ alle temporel moe[ue]-ment dwelliþ in þe symplicite of hys presence and embraceþ and considereþ alle þe infinit spaces of tymes preteritȝ and futures and lokeþ in þis symple knowynge alle þinges of preterit ryȝt as þei weren ydoon presently ryȝt now ¶ yif þou wolt þan þenke and avisen þe prescience by whiche it knoweþ al[le] þinges \*þou ne shalt nat demen it as prescience of þinges to comen. but þou shalt demen [it] more ryȝtfully þat it is science of presence or of instaunce þat neuer ne fayleþ. for whiche it nis nat ycleped providence but it sholde raper be cleded purueaunce þat is establissed ful fer fro ryȝt lowe þinges. and byholdeþ from a-fer alle þinges ryȝt as it were fro þe heye heyȝte of þinges. whi axest þou þan or why disputest þou þan þat þilke þinges ben don by necessite whiche þat ben yseyen and yknownen by þe deuyne syȝt. syn þat for soþe men ne maken nat þilke þinges necessarie. whiche þat þe[i] seen be ydoon in hire syȝt. for addiþ þi byholdynge any necessite to þilke þinges þat þou byholdest present. ¶ Nay quod I. p. Certys þan yif men myȝte maken any digne comparisoun or collacioun of þe presence diuine. and of þe presence of mankynde. ryȝt so as ȝe seen somme þinges in þis temporel presente. ryȝt so seep god alle þinges by hys eterne present. ¶ wherfore þis dyuyne prescience ne chaungeþ nat þe nature ne þe proprete of þinges but byholdeþ swyche þinges present to hym ward. as þei shollen bytiden to ȝow ward in tyme to come. ne it ne confoundeþ nat þe Iugementȝ of þinges but by of syȝt of hys pouȝt he knoweþ þe þinges to comen as wel necessarie as nat necessarie. ryȝt so as whan ȝe seen to-gidre a man walke on þe erþe and þe sonne arysen in [the] heuene. al be it so þat ȝe seen and byholden þat

5058 *alle*—al  
5063 *moeuement*—moeuement  
5063 *þenke*—thinken  
5063 *avisen*—ayse  
5064 *whiche*—which  
5064 *al[le]*—alle

5066 *shalt*—shal  
[it]—from C.  
5068 *whiche*—which  
5074-76 *syȝt*—syhte  
5075 *whiche*—which  
þe[i]—they

5065 *come*—comyn  
5066 *of syȝt*—O syhte  
5067 *he knoweþ*—MS. repeats  
5060 [the]—from C.

oon *and* þat oper to-gidre. 3it napeles 3e demen *and* discernen þat þat oon is uoluntarie *and* þat oper is necessarie. ¶ Ryȝt so þan [the] deuyne lokynge byholdynge alle þinges vnder hym ne troubleþ nat þe qualite of þinges þat ben certeynely present to hym ward. but as to þe condicioun of tyme for soþe þei ben future. for whiche it folwiþ þat þis nis non oppinioun. but raþer a stedfast knowyng ystrenged by soþenes. þat whan þat god knoweþ any þinge to be he ne vnwoot nat þat þilke þinge wanteþ necessite to be. þis is to seyn þat whan þat god knoweþ any þinge to bitide. he woot wel þat it ne haþ no necessite to bitide. *and* yif þou seist here þat þilke þinge þat god seep to bytide it ne may nat vnbytide. as who seiþ it mot bitide. ¶ *and* þilke þinge þat þat ne may nat vnbytide it mot bitide by necessite. *and* þat þou streine me to þis name of necessite. certys I wol wel confessen *and* byknowe a þinge of ful sadde trouþe. but vnneþ shal þere any wyȝt [mowe] seen it or comen þer-to. but yif þat he be byholder of þe deuyne þouȝte. ¶ for I wol answere þe þus. þat þilke þinge þat is future whan it is referred to þe deuyne knowyng þan is it necessarie. but certys whan it is vnderstonden in hys owen kynde men sen it [is] vtterly fre *and* absolut from alle necessite. for certys þer ben two maneres of necessites. þat oon necessite is symple as þus. þat it byhoueþ by necessite þat alle men be mortal or dedely. an oper necessite is condicionel as þus. yif þou wost þat a man walkiþ. it byhoueþ by necessite þat he walke. þilke þinge þan þat any wyȝt haþ yknowe to be. it ne may ben non oper weyes þan he knoweþ it to be. ¶ but þis condicioun ne draweþ nat wiþ hir þilke necessite symple. For certys þis necessite condicionel.

When God knows that anything is to be, he knows at the same time that it is not under the necessity of being—but this is not conjecture, but certain knowledge founded upon truth. If you insist that *what God foresees shall and must happen; and that which cannot do otherwise than happen, must needs happen*, and so bind me to admit a necessity, I must confess that things are under such a restraint; but it is a truth that we scarce can comprehend, unless we be acquainted with the Divine counsels. For I will answer you thus. That the  
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thing which is to happen in relation to the Divine knowledge is necessary; but, considered in its own nature, seems free and absolute. There are two kinds of necessity—one simple; as men must necessarily die—the other is conditional, as if you know a man walks he must necessarily walk—for that which is known cannot be otherwise than what it is apprehended to be. But this condition does not infer the absolute necessity, for the nature of the thing itself does not here constitute the necessity, but the necessity arises from the conjunction of the condition. No necessity compels a man to walk who does so

5092 *discerne*—discernen  
5093 [*the*]—from C.  
5097 *whiche*—which  
5098 *stedfast*—stedefast  
*soþenes*—soþhennesse  
5102 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
5104 *bitide*—bide

5103 *sadde*—sad  
*vnneþ*—vnnethe  
[*mowe*]—from C.  
5106 *comen*—come  
5110 *þouȝte*—thought  
*answere*—answeren  
5113 *sen*—MS. sene, C. sen

5113 [*is*]—from C.  
5117 *dedely*—dedly  
5119 *haþ*—MS. haþe  
5121 *condicioun*—from C.,  
MS. *necessite*

willingly, but it must be necessary that he walk when he does step forward. So everything that is present to the eye of Providence must assuredly be, although there is

[\* fol. 40.] nothing in its own nature to constitute that necessity. Since God beholds all future events proceeding from free-will as actually present—these events in relation to Divine sight are necessary—yet in relation to themselves they are absolutely free. All things which God foresees shall surely come to pass; but some of these things proceed from free-will, which although they hap-

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pen, yet do not thereby change their nature, as before they happened they had it in their power not to happen. But it is a thing of no moment then, whether things are necessary in their own nature or not, since by the condition of the Divine knowledge they fell out as if they were necessitated.

P. The difference is explained in the instances lately given you, of the man walking, &c. The event of the former was necessary before it befell, whereas that of the latter was altogether free. B. Then I did not go from the

þe propre nature of it ne make þit nauzt. but þe adieccioun of þe condicioun makip it. for no necessite ne constreynep a man to [gon / þat] goop by his propre wille. al be it so þat whan he goop þat it is necessarie þat he goop.

¶ Ryzt on þis same manere þan. yif þat þe purueaunce of god seep any þing present. þan mot pilke \*þinge be by necessite. al þouȝ þat it ne haue no necessite of hys owen nature. but certys þe futures þat bytyden by freedom of arbitre god seep hem alle to-gidre presentȝ. þise þinges þan [yif] þei ben referred to þe deuyne syzt. þan ben þei maked necessarie to þe condicioun of þe deuyne knowynge. but certys yif pilke þinges ben considered by hem self þei ben absolot of necessite. and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of þe liberte of hire owen nature. þan certys wiþ outen doute alle þe þingus shollen be doon whiche þat god woot by-form þat þei ben to comen. but somme of hem comen and bitiden of

[free] arbitre or of fre wille. þat al be it so þat þei by-tiden. ȝit algates ne lese þei nat hire propre nature ne beynge. by þe whiche first or þat þei were doon þei hadden power nat to han bitidd. Boece. what is þis to seyn þan quod I. þat þinges ne ben nat necessarie by hire propre nature. so as þei comen in alle maneres in þe lykenesse of necessite by þe condicioun of þe deuyne science. Philosophie. þis is þe difference quod she. þat þo þinges þat I purposed[e] þe a litel here byforn. þat is to seyn þe sonne arysynge and þe man walkynge þat perwhiles þat pilke þinges ben ydon. þei ne myzten nat ben vndon. napeles þat oon of hem or it was ydon it byhoued[e] by necessite þat it was ydon. but nat þat oper. ryzt so it is here þat þe þinges þat god haþ present.

5123 nauzt—nat

5125 [gon þat]—from C.

wille—wil

5128 mot—MS. mote, C. mot

5131 presentȝ—present

5132 [yif]—from C.

syzt—syhte

5137 wiþ outen—with-owto

5138 whiche—which

5139 somme—som

5140 [free]—from C.

5141 ne (2)—C. in

5142 whiche—which

were doon—weeryn Idoon

5143 bitidd—MS. bitidde, C.

bytyd

5148 purposed[e] — purposede

5150 ydon—MS. ydone, C.

I-doon

myzten—myhte

5151 vndon—MS. vndone, C.

vndoon

5151-2 ydon—MS. ydone, C.

I-doon

5152 byhoued[e]—houydy

5153 haþ—MS. hape



wip outhen doute þei shulle ben. but somme of hem descendip of þe nature of þinges as þe sonne arysynge. and somme descendip of þe power of þe doers as þe man walkynge. ¶ þan seide I. no wronge þat yif þat þise þinges ben referred to þe deuyne knowynge þan ben þei necessarie. and yif þei ben considered by hem selfe þan ben þei absolut from þe bonde of necessite. ryȝt so [as] alle þinges þat appiereþ or sheweþ to þe wittes yif þou referre it to resoun it is vniuersel. and yif þou referre it or look[e] it to it self. þan is it synguler. but now yif þou seist þus þat yif it be in my power to chaunge my purpose. þan shal I voide þe purueaunce of god. whan þat perauenture I shal han chaunged þo þinges þat he knoweþ byform. þan shal I answeere þe þus ¶ Certys þou maist wel chaungen þi purpos but for as mochel as þe present soþenesse of þe deuyne purueaunce byholdeþ þat þou mayst chaungen þi purpose. and whepir þou wolt chaunge it or no. and whider-ward þat þou tourne it. þou maist nat eschewen þe deuyne prescience ryȝt as þou ne mayst nat fleen þe syȝt of þe present eye. al þouȝ þat þou tourne þi self by þi fre wille in to dyuerse accioun. ¶ But þou mayst seyn aȝeyne how shal it þan be. shal nat þe dyuyne science ben chaunged by my disposicioun whan þat I wol o þing now and now an oþer. and þilke prescience ne semeþ it nat to enterchaunge stoundes of knowynge. as who seiþ. ne shal it nat seme to vs þat þe deuyne prescience enterchaungeþ hys dyuers stoundes of knowynge. so þat it knowe somme tyme o þing and somme tyme þe contrarie. ¶ No for soþe. [quod I] for þe deuyne syȝt renneþ to-forne and seeþ alle futures and clepeþ hem aȝein

truth when I said that some things referred to the Divine knowledge are necessary, while considered in themselves they are not under the bond of necessity. In the same way everything that is an object of sense is *general* when considered in relation to reason—but particular when considered by itself. But you may say—If I am able to change my purpose I can deceive providence by changing that which she hath foreseen I would do.

P. You may perhaps alter your purpose—but as providence takes note of your

5168 intentions, you cannot deceive her; for you cannot escape the divine prescience though you have the power, through a free-will, to vary and diversify your actions. But you may say—Shall the divine knowledge be changed according to the mutability of my disposition, and the apprehensions of the Deity fluctuated with my changing purposes? No, indeed! The view of the Deity fore-runs every future event, and brings it back into the presence of his own knowledge, which does not vary, as you imagine, to conform to your caprices, but remaining fixed, at once

5154 *wip outhen*—with-owte  
shulle—shollen  
5156 *doers*—doeres  
5157 *wronge*—wrong  
5159 *selfe*—self  
5160 *from*—fro  
5161 *bonde*—bond  
[as]—from C.

5163 *look[e]*—loke  
5166 *þo*—the  
5168 *soþenesse*—soþnesse  
5170 *chaungen*—chaunge  
5173 *syȝt*—syhte  
5175 *wille*—wyl  
5177 *wol*—wole  
5179 *enterchaunge*—MS. en-

terchaungyng, C. entre-  
chaunge  
5181 *hys*—hise  
5182 *somme* (1)—sum  
5182 *somme* (2)—som  
5183 *syȝt*—syhte  
5184 *to-forne*—to-for

foresees and comprehends all your changes. This faculty of comprehending and seeing all things as present, God does not receive from the issue of futurities, but from the simplicity of his own nature. Here, then, is an answer to your former objection—that it is folly to think that our future actions and events are the causes of the prescience of God. For the Divine mind, em-

[\* fol. 41 b.]  
bracing and comprehending all things by a present knowledge, plans and directs all things and is not dependent upon futurity. Since no necessity is imposed

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upon things by the Divine prescience, there remains to men an inviolable freedom of will. And those laws are just which assign rewards and punishments to men possessing free-will. Moreover, God, who sits on high, foreknows all things, and the eternal presence of his knowledge concurs with the future quality of our actions, dispensing rewards to good and punishments to evil men.

Nor are our hopes and prayers reposed in, and addressed to God in vain, which when they are sincere cannot be inefficacious nor unsuccessful. Resist and turn from vice—honour and

and retournip hem to þe presence of hys propre knowynge. ne he ne entrechangeþ nat [so] as þou wenest þe stoundes of forknowyng [as] now þis now þat. but he ay dwellynge comip byforn and embraceþ at o strook alle þi mutaciouns. and þis presence to comprehendend and to sen alle þinges. god ne haþ nat taken it of þe bitydyng of þinges forto come. but of hys propre symplite. ¶ and her by is assoiled pilke þing þat þou putttest a litel her byforne. þat is to seyne þat it is vnworpi þinge to seyn þat oure futures ȝeuen cause of þe science of god ¶ For certys \*þis strengþe of þe deuyne science whiche þat embraceþ alle þinge by his presentarie knowynge establissep manere to alle þingus and it ne awip nat to lattere þinges. and syn þat þise þinges ben þus. þat is to seyn syn þat necessite nis nat in þinges by þe deuyne prescience. þan is þer fredom of arbitre. þat dwelleþ hool and vnwemmed to mortal men. ne þe lawes ne purpose nat wikkedly meedes and peynes to þe willynges of men þat ben vnbounde and quit of alle necessite. ¶ And god byholder and forwiter of alle þinges dwellip aboue and þe present eternite of hys syzt rennep alwey wiþ þe dyuerse qualite of oure dedes dispensyng and ordeynynge medes to good[e] men. and tourmentȝ to wicked men. ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben þer nat put in god hope and prayeres. þat ne mowen nat ben vnspedful ne wiþ oute effect whan þei ben ryztful ¶ wiþstond þan and eschewe þou vices. worshippe and loue þou vertus. areise þi corage to ryztful hoopes. ȝelde þou humble preiers an heyȝe. grete necessite of prowess and vertue is encharged and comaunded to ȝow yif ȝe nil nat dissimulen. ¶ Syn þat ȝe worchen and doon. þat is to seyn ȝoure dedes and ȝoure workes

5186 [so]—from C.  
5187 [as]—from C.  
5188 comip—comth  
5190 haþ—MS. haþe  
5193 seyne—seyn  
5196 whiche—which  
5198 awip—oweth

5199 þat is to — pre-  
science—omitted  
5203 vnbounde—vnbowunden  
quit—quite  
5206 syzt—sihte  
5207 good[e]—goode  
5211 wiþstond—MS. wiþ-

stonde, C. withstond  
5213 an heyȝe—a heygh  
grete—Gret  
5215 worchen—workyn  
5216 and (2)—or

by-fore þe eyen of þe Inge þat seeþ *and* demeþ alle þinges. [To whom be goye *and* worshiþe bi Infynyt tymes / AMEN.]

love virtue, exalt  
your mind to God  
(the truest hope),  
offer up your  
prayers with  
humility. If you  
are sincere you

5219

will feel that you are under an obligation to lead a good and virtuous life, inasmuch as all your actions and works are done in the presence of an all-discerning Judge.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUINTUS. ET VLTIMUS.

5217 *by-fore—by-for*  
5218 [*To whom—Amen*]  
from C.; MS. reads *et*  
*cetera* after 'þinges.' C.

ends with the following  
rubric:  
Explicit explicat ludere  
scriptor eat

Finito libro sit laus *et*  
gloria Christo  
Corpore scribentis sit  
gratia cunctipotentis



## APPENDIX.

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[*Camb. Univ. MS. li. 3. 21, fol. 52 b.*]

Chawcer vp-on this fyfte metur of the second book

- A** Blysful lyf a paysyble *and* a swete  
 Ledden the poeples in the former age  
 They helde hem paied of the fructes *þat* þey ete  
 Whiche *þat* the feldes yaue hem by vsage 4  
 They ne weere nat forpampred *with* owtrage  
 Onknowyn was þ<sup>e</sup> quyerne *and* ek the melle  
 They eten mast hawes *and* swych pownage  
 And dronken water of the colde welle 8
- ¶ Yit nas the grownd nat wownded *with* þ<sup>e</sup> plowh  
 But corn vp-sprong vnsowe of mannes hond  
 þe which they gnodded *and* eete nat half .I.-nowh  
 No man yit knewe the forwes of his lond 12  
 No man the fyr owt of the flynt yit fonde  
 Vn-koruen and vn-grobbed lay the vyne  
 No man yit in the mortar spices grond  
 To clarre ne to sawse of galentyne 16
- ¶ No Madyr welde or wod no litestere  
 Ne knewh / the fles was of is former hewe  
 No flesh ne wyste offence of egge or spere  
 No coyn ne knewh man which is fals or trewe 20  
 No ship yit karf the wawes grene *and* blewe  
 No Marchaunt yit ne fette owt-landissh ware  
 No batails trompes for the werres folk ne knewe  
 Ne towres heye *and* walles rownde or square 24

¶ What sholde it han awayled to werreye  
 Ther lay no profyt ther was no rychesse  
 But corsed was the tyme .I. dar' wel seye [fol. 53.]  
 þat men fyrst dede hir swety bysynesse 28  
 To grobbe vp metal lurkyng in dirkenesse  
 And in þe Ryuerys fyrst gemmys sowhte  
 Allas than sprong' vp al the cursydnesse  
 Of coueytise þat fyrst ovr sorwe browhte 32

¶ Thyse tyrauntz put hem gladly nat in pres  
 No places wyldnesse ne no busshes for to wynne  
 Ther pouerte is as seith diogenes  
 Ther as vitayle ek is so skars *and* thinne 36  
 þat nat but mast or apples is ther Inne  
 But þer as bagges ben *and* fat vitaille  
 Ther wol they gon *and* spare for no synne  
 With al hir ost the Cyte forto a-sayle 40

¶ Yit was no paleis chaumbres ne non halles  
 In kaues *and* wodes softe *and* swete  
 Sleptin this blyssed folk' *with-owte* walles  
 On gras or leues in parfyt Ioye reste *and* quiete 44  
 No down of fetheres ne no bleched shete  
 Was kyd to hem but in surte they slepte  
 Hir hertes weere al on *with-owte* galles  
 Euerych of hem his feith to oother kepte 48

¶ Vnforged was the hawberke *and* the plate  
 þe lambyssh poeple voyded of alle vyse  
 Hadden no fantesye to debate  
 But eche of hem wolde oother wel cheryce 52  
 No pride non enuye non Auaryce  
 No lord no taylage by no tyranye  
 Vmblesse *and* pes good feith the emperice  
 . . . . . 56

39, 40 MS. transposes the lines

44 On—MS. Or

56 A line omitted, but no gap left for one.

¶ Yit was nat Iuppiter the lykerous  
*pat* fyrst was fadyr of delicacie  
 Come in this world ne nembroth desyrrous  
 To regne had nat maad his towres hye 60  
 Allas allas now may [men] wepe And crye  
 For in owre dayes nis but couetyse  
 Dowblenesse *and* tresoun *and* enuye  
 Poyson *and* manslawhtre *and* mordre in sondry wyse

## CAUSER / BALADES DE VILAGE SANZ PEINTURE

¶ This wrecched worlde-is transmutacioun  
 As wele / or wo / now poeere *and* now honou  
 With-owten ordyr or wis descresyoun  
 Gouerned is by fortunes errour 4  
 But natheles the lakke of hyr fauowr  
 Ne may nat don me syngen thowh I. deye  
 Iay tout perdu moun temps *et* moun labour [fol. 53 b.]  
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 8

¶ Yit is me left the lyht of my resoun  
 To knowen frend fro foo in thi merowr  
 So mochel hath yit thy whirlynge vp *and* down  
 I-tawht me for to knowe in an howr 12  
 But trewely no fors of thi reddowr  
 To hym *pat* ouer hym self hath the maystrye  
 My suffysaunce shal be my socour  
 For fynaly fortune I. thee deffye 16

¶ O socrates pou stidfast chaumpyoun  
 She neuer myht[e] be thi tormentowr  
 Thow neuer dreddest hyr oppressyoun  
 Ne in hyr chere fownde thow no sauour 20  
 Thow knewe wel the deseyte of hyr colour  
 And *pat* hir most[e] worshipe is to lye  
 I knew hir ek a fals dissimulour  
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 24

## LE RESPOUNCE DE FORTUNE A PLEINTIF.

¶ No man ys wrechchyd but hym self yt wene  
*And* he þat hath hym self hat suffisaunce  
 Whi seysthow thanne y am [to] the so kene  
 þat hast thy self owt of my gouernaunce 28  
 Sey thus graunt mercy of thyn haboundaunce  
 That thou hast lent or this why wolt þou stryue  
 What woost thou yit how y the wol auaunce  
*And* ek thou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 32

¶ I haue the tawht deuisyoun by-twene  
 Frend of effect *and* frende of cowntenaunce  
 The nedeth nat the galle of no hyene  
 þat cureth eyen derkyd for penaunce 36  
 Now se[st] thou cleer þat weere in ignoraunce  
 Yit halt thin ancre *and* yit thou mayst aryue  
 Ther bownte berth the keye of my substaunce  
*And* ek þou hast thy beste frende alyue 40

¶ How manye haue .I. refused to sustigne  
 Syn .I. the fostred haue in thy plesaunce  
 Wolthow thanne make a statute on þy quyene  
 þat .I. shal ben ay at thy ordynaunce 44  
 Thou born art in my regne of varyaunce  
 Abowte the wheel with oother most thou dryue  
 My loore is bet than wikke is thi greuaunce  
*And* ek þou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 48

## LE RESPOUNCE DU PLEINTIF COUNTRÉ FORTUNE.

¶ Thy loore y dempne / it is aduersyte [fol. 54.]  
 My frend maysthow nat reuen blynde goddessse  
 þat .I. thy frendes knowe .I. thanke to the  
 Tak hem agayn / lat hem go lye on presse 52  
 The negardye in kepynge hyr rychesse  
 Prenostik is thou wolt hir towr asayle

37 *se[st]*—partly erased and *ist* written on it in a later hand.  
 41 *igne* of *sustigne* is in a later hand.

Wikke appetyt comth ay before sykenesse  
 In general this rewle may nat fayle 56

LE RESPONCE DE FORTUNE COUNTRÉ LE PLEINTIF

¶ Thow pynchest at my mutabylyte  
 For .I. the lente a drope of my rychesse  
 And now me lykyth to *wilk*-drawe me  
 Whi sholdysthow my realte *apresse* 60  
 The see may ebbe *and* flowen moore or lesse  
 The welkne hath myht to shyne reyne or hayle  
 Ryht so mot .I. kythen my brutelnesse  
 In general this rewle may nat fayle 64

LE PLEINTIF

¶ Lo excussyoun of the maieste  
 þat al purueyeth of his ryhtwysnesse  
 That same thinge fortune clepyn ye  
 Ye blynde beestys ful of lewednesse 68  
 The heuene hath *proprete* of sykynesse  
 This world hath euer resteles trauayle  
 Thy laste day is ende of myn inter[e]sse  
 In general this rewele may nat fayle 72

LENUOY DE FORTUNE

¶ Prynses .I. prey yow of yowre gentileesses  
 Lat nat this man on me thus crye *and* pleyne  
 And .I. shal quyte yow yowre bysynesse  
 At my requeste as thre of yow or tweyne 76  
 þat but yow lest releue hym of hys peyne  
 Preyeth hys best frend of his noblesse  
 That to som betere estat he may attayne

## GLOSSARIAL INDEX.

- ABAIST = ABYEST, sufferest, endurest, 39/1014  
 ABAIST, abashed, 107/3047  
 ABASSEN, to be abashed, dismayed, 146/4213  
 ABESID (= ABAYSSHED), abashed, 7/92  
 ABIDE, to await, 7/93. 'ABIDE after' = look after, expect, 13/250; *p.p.* ABIDEN, waited, 86/2405  
 Abieþ, suffers, 109/3101  
 ABLYNGE, enabling, fitting (*ap-ians*), 26/624, 38/2440  
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 Accordounce, agreement, 143/4134  
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 Achoken, to choke, 47/1235  
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 Acordable, agreeing, 62/1694  
 Acusor, informer, 72/1990  
 Addre (Nadre), adder, 170/4959  
 Adoune, down, downward, 7/92  
 Adounward, downwards, 7/87  
 Adrad, in fear, afraid, 43/1132  
 Adresse, to direct, control, 163/4721  
 Afer, afar, 164/4767  
 Agast, aghast, frightened, 76/2107  
 Agaste, to terrify, frighten, 141/4051  
 Agon, ago, 70/1907  
 Agreeableté, goodwill, 42/1099  
 Agrisen, to be afraid, dread, 10/178, 31/777  
 Ajuge, to adjudge, 15/325  
 Aknowe, acknowledged, 17/367  
 Aldirmost, most of all, 124/3557  
 Algates, Algate, yet, nevertheless, 19/439, 68/1849, 81/2242, 162/4696, 4698  
 Allegge, to alleviate, 124/3529  
 Alouterly, utterly, entirely, 109/3090  
 Alperfairest, fairest of all, 87/2422

- Alperfirst, first of all, 10/180  
 Alpermoste, most of all, 158/4563  
 Alperworste, worst of all. 157/4562  
 Alyene, to alienate, 27/671  
 Amenuse, to lessen, diminish, 19/426, 40/1039  
 Amenusynge, diminution, 46/1192  
 Ameve, Amoeve, Amove, to move, 6/64, 23/551  
 Amoneste, to admonish, 171/4971  
 Amonestyng, admonition, exhortation, 149/4296  
 Amongus, amongst, 52/1380  
 Amonicioun, admonition, 13/253  
 Amynistre, to administer, 135/3891  
 Ancre, anchor, 41/1050  
 Angre, grief, misery, 41/1072  
 Anguisse, Angysse, anguish, 79/2177; to torment, 80/2198  
 Anguissous, anxious, sorrowful, 41/1062, 1606  
 Anoie, to be grieved, be sorry, 41/1058  
 Anoienge, 22/532  
 Anoies, hurtful, 47/1238  
 Anoious, annoying, hurtful, 7/102  
 An-oone, anon, 42/1086  
 Anoyously, dangerously, hurtfully, 80/2214  
 Apaise, to appease, 148/4278  
 Apasse, to pass away, go, 46/1195  
 Aperceive, to perceive, 16/344, 134/3845  
 Apertly, plainly, 17/386, 91/2543  
 Appaie, to please, satisfy, 47/1235  
 Appaire, to impair, 25/597  
 Apparaile, to clothe, adorn, 8/116  
 Apparaillement, clothing, ornament, 49/1300  
 Appertiene, to appertain, 73/1996  
 Applien, bend to, join, 161/4660  
 Aprese, to oppress, 184/60  
 Aprochen, to approach, 6/63, 66  
 Arace, Arase, Arrace, to tear, tear from, separate, 11/196, 27/671, 98/2774, 152/4278  
 Araise, Araise, Areyse, to raise, 51/1357, 118/3369, 178/5212  
 Arbitre, will, free will, 156/4500  
 Ardaunt, ardent, 106/3031  
 Aresten, to stop, arrest, 32/815  
 Aretten, to ascribe to, impute to, 40/1016  
 Arist, arises, 143/4138  
 Armurers, armours, arms, 51/1342  
 Armures, armour, 9/131  
 Arst, first, 95/2675  
 Arwe, arrow, 148/4262  
 Arysyng, rising, 22/512  
 Aryve, to bring to shore, 122/3479  
 Asayle, to assail, 181/40  
 Ascape, to escape, 8/129  
 Asondre, asunder, 64/1740  
 Aspre, sharp, rough, 32/806, 80/2216  
 Asprenesse, sharpness, 127/3627  
 Assaie, to essay, 42/1083  
 Assemble, to gather together, amass (money), 80/2203  
 Asseure, to assure, 16/330  
 Assoilen, to absolve, pay, unloose, dissolve, 149/4303, 154/4459  
 Astat, estate, state, 30/738  
 Astoned, astonished, 7/92, 63/1702; *stupidus*, 122/3471  
 Astonynge, Astonynge, astonishment, 9/134, 132/3780  
 Ataste, to taste, 30/756  
 Ataynt, Ateint, attained, knowing, experienced, 31/772, 69/1905

- Attayne, to reach, 12/227  
 Atte, at the, 95/2675  
 Attemperaunce, tempering, temperament, 138/3973, 144/4145  
 Attempre, to temper, moderate, 8/115, 111/3154; control, 163/4721; (*adj.*) modest, 29/728, 40/1033  
 Atteyne, to attain, 118/3358  
 Atwyne, in two, 98/2769  
 Avalen, to fall down, 143/4139  
 Avaunce, to advance, further, 41/1057  
 Auaunte, to boast, 5/26, 19/426  
 Auctorité, authority, 7/91  
 Aventure, fortuitous, 28/697, 40/1018  
 Aventure, event, 21/476  
 Autour, author, 58/1556  
 Auȝte, ought, 11/213  
 Avisen, to consider, 174/5063  
 Awaite, snare, 80/2214  
 Awaitour, one who lies in wait, 121/3463  
 Awip = aweþ, oweth (*debet*), 178/5198  
 Ay, ever, 184/55  
 Ay-dwellynge, ever-dwelling, 173/5044  
 Ayenis, against, 97/2749  
 Axe, to ask, 17/357, 24/579  
 Aȝeins, Aȝeynes, Aȝeynest, against, 10/183, 11/194, 12/221, 13/255  
 Aȝeinewarde, on the contrary, on the other hand, 42/1098  
 Bacine, basin, 133/3806  
 Batailen, to war on, do battle against, 18/412  
 Been, bees, 80/2200  
 Ber, did bear, 6/61  
 Bere, Bear, 143/4124  
 Beren on hond, to accuse falsely, 20 449  
 Bet, better, 63/1703  
 Bibled. covered over with blood, 48/1860  
 Bisien, to trouble, 8/112  
 Bitake. *See* Bytake.  
 Bitidd, happened, 176/5143  
 Bitwixen. *See* Bytwixen.  
 Blaundissinge, flattering, 30/749  
 Blaundyshing, flattery, blandishment, 34/866  
 Bleched, bleached, 181/45  
 Blemisse, to blemish, abuse (*lacero*), 20/472  
 Blyssed, blessed, 181/43  
 Blypnesse, joyfulness, 37/957  
 Boch, botch, blain, sore, 72/1977  
 Bode, to foretell, 143/4130  
 Bole, bull, 148/4274  
 Boot, did bite, 53/1400  
 Bordure, border, hem, 6/50  
 Bosten, to boast, 79/2171  
 Botme, bottom, 12/234  
 Bounté, Bownté, goodness, kindness, 19/444, 46/1202, 183/39  
 Brenne (*pref.* Brende), to burn, 19/437, 106/3031  
 Brid, bird, 68/1867  
 Bristlede, bristly, 148/4281  
 Brode, broadly, plainly, 49/1298  
 Brutel, brittle, fragile, 45/1174  
 Brutelnesse, brittleness, frailty, 184/63  
 Burpe, birth, 78/2165  
 Busshel (corn), 15/312  
 Bydolven (*p.p.*), buried, 151/4348  
 Byen (for *abyen*), suffer, 125/3578  
 Byforen, BYFORN, BYFORNE, before, 20/454



- Bygunne, didst begin, 37/941  
 Bygyle, to beguile, 25/615  
 Byhate, to hate, 75/2051  
 Byheste, promise, 149/4303  
 Byhete, to promise, 61/1651, 69/1903  
 Byhynde, Byhynden, behind, 108/3062, 110/3137  
 Byhyzt, promised, 70/1925, 85/2374, 157/4558  
 Byknownen, Byknowe, to acknowledge, 146/4211, 175/5107; *p.p.* Byknownen, 90/2514  
 Byleve, believe, 28/695  
 Byname, an additional name, 84/2333  
 Byneþen, beneath, 49/1295  
 Bynomen (*p.p.*), taken from, 124/3527  
 Bynyme, to deprive of, take away, 43/1117, 70/1930  
 Byreft, bereft, 33/837  
 Byseche, to beseech, 86/2408  
 Bysmoked, besmoked, 5/49  
 Byspotte, to defile, 73/2009  
 Bystowe, to bestow, 24/585  
 Bysynesse, toil, 184/75  
 Bytake, to entrust, 32/808  
 Bytide (*pret.* BYTIDDE, *p.p.* BYTID), to befall, happen, 20/474, 151/4360, 155/4467  
 Bytwene, between, 6/54  
 Bytwixen, betwixt, 132/3785  
 Bytynge, biting, sharp, 63/1721  
 Bywepe, to weep for, 26/644  
 Byweyle, to bewail, 26/643  
 Caitif, Caytif, wretched, 21/489, 116/3289  
 Careyne, carcase, corpse, 116/3307  
 Cariages, taxes (*vectigalia*), 15/303  
 Celebrable, commendable, noted, 84/2320, 147/4257  
 Certein, certain, 170/4952  
 Cese, to cease, 36/904, 130/3716  
 Cesse, to cease, 133/3821  
 Challenge, to claim, 52/1380  
 Chastie, Chastysen, to chastise, 125/3579, 145/4170  
 Chayere, chair, seat, 21/503  
 Cheminey, furnace (*caminus*), 12/236  
 Cheryce, to cherish, 181/52  
 Chesen, to choose, 76/2096  
 Cheyn, chain, 8/122  
 Chiere, CHERE, CHOERE, face, countenance, 8/123, 12/232, 108/3080  
 Chirkyng, groaning (*stridens*), 25/618  
 Clarré, a kind of wine, 50/1329  
 Cleer, serene, 45/1168  
 Clepe, to call, 4/17, 11/188, 17/369  
 Clifte, fissure, cleft, 130/3721  
 Cliven, CLIVE, to stick, cling, adhere to, 41/1050, 101/2858, 159/4600  
 Cloumben = CLOMBEN, climbed, ascended, 57/1533  
 Coempcioun, coemption, 15/309  
 Coeterne, coeternal, 172/5019  
 Colasioun, collation, 125/3569  
 Collacioun, comparison, 165/4805  
 Combred, troubled, 94/2642  
 Commoeve, to move, 107/3043  
 Commoevyng, moving (*excitans*), 12/233  
 Communalité, commonwealth, 14/271, 142/4108  
 Comparisoune, to compare, 58/1567  
 Complyssen, to accomplish, 124/3534

- Compotent, having the mastery  
 (*compos*), 172/5012  
 Compoune, to compose, form, 87/  
 2419, 93/2598  
 Comprende, comprehend, 165/  
 4807  
 Comunableté, commonwealth, 13/  
 268  
 Comune, common, 9/140, 15/310  
 Confederacie, conspiracy, 53/1399  
 Confus, confused, 132/3788  
 Conjecte, to conjecture, 27/649,  
 114/3230  
 Conjoignen, to join, 92/2573  
 Conjuracioun, conspiracy, 18/394,  
 53/1399  
 Consequente, consequence, 84/  
 2323  
 Constreyne, to constrain, con-  
 tract, 5/38  
 Consulser (CONSEILER), consul, 51/  
 1364, 1366  
 Consumpt (*consumptus*), con-  
 sumed, 60/1632  
 Contek, contest, strife, 130/3745  
 Contene, Contienen, to contain,  
 comprehend, 24/573, 116/3302  
 Contrarien, to be opposed to, ad-  
 verse to, 154/4440  
 Contrarious, adverse, opposite,  
 21/488, 53/1420  
 Contrefeten, to counterfeit, 173/  
 5031  
 Convenably, fitly, conveniently,  
 142/4089  
 Convict, convicted, 19/440  
 Cop, top, summit, 44/1159  
 Corage, mind, spirit, 118/3367,  
 119/3398  
 Corige, to correct, 125/3581  
 Corompe, Corumpe, to become  
 corrupt, 98/2766, 96/2697  
 Corone, Coroune, a crown, 119/  
 3385, 91/2555  
 Corsed, cursed, 181/27  
 Corsednesse, cursedness, 90/2526  
 Corumpynge, corruption, 103/  
 2927  
 Cosyne, cousin, 106/3020  
 Couche, to lay, set, 35/890  
 Coupable, guilty, 10/172  
 Couth, known, 25/592  
 Coveite, to covet, 51/1365  
 Covenable, fit, convenient, 97/  
 2731  
 Covertour, Coverture, covering,  
 118/3361, 159/4622  
 Covetise, Coveytyse, covetous-  
 ness, 20/451, 181/32  
 Covine, deceit, collusion, 21/493  
 Coyn, money, 180/20  
 Creat, created, 99/2796  
 Crike, creek, 82/2260  
 Croppe, top, 69/1877  
 Curacioun, cure (*curatio*), 26/  
 632  
 Curage, 30/753. *See* Corage.  
 Cure, care, 64/1753  
 Dalf (*pret. of delven*), dug, delved,  
 51/1349  
 Damoisel, damsel, 30/762  
 Dampnacioun, condemnation, 16/  
 352  
 Daunten, Dawnte, to subdue,  
 daunt, 77/2115, 147/4258  
 Debonairly, mildly, 122/3490  
 Deboneire, gentle (*mitis*), 22/519;  
 good, 88/2450  
 Deceivable, deceptive, 77/2124  
 Dede, did, 181/28  
 Dedid, made dead, 127/3623  
 Deef, deaf, 4/18  
 Deere, dear, 37/941  
 Deeþ, death, 4/15

- Defaute, fault, defect, 18/402  
 Defende, to forbid, 34/859  
 Deffeted, enfeebled, weakened  
 30/735  
 Defoule, to defile, 21/491, 68/  
 1573  
 Degrees, steps, 6/54  
 Delices, delight, delights (*deli-*  
*cia*), 38/968, 41/1062, 66/1787  
 Delitable, delectable, 30/756  
 Delitably, delightfully, 108/3078  
 Delve, should dig, 151/4352  
 Delver, a digger, 151/4359  
 Delyé, thin, fine, 5/43. Fr. *délié*.  
 Dempne, to condemn, 183/49  
 Denoye, to deny, 88/2464  
 Departe, to separate, 29/719  
 Depelyche, deeply, 160/4647  
 Depeynte, to depict, 111/3146  
 Depper, deeper, 27/649  
 Derke, Derken, to darken, 7/90,  
 20/448  
 Derworpe, Derworpi, precious, 31/  
 787, 41/1046  
 Desarmen, disarm, 13/241  
 Desceivaunce, deception, 81/2240  
 Desceive, Desseive, to deceive,  
 9/141, 38/967  
 Descryven, to describe, 99/2813  
 Desmaie, to dismay, 35/896  
 Desordene, inordinate, 36/912  
 Despoylynge, spoil, prey, 147/  
 4259  
 Destempraunce, severity, 97/  
 2749  
 Destinal, fatal, 135/3884  
 Destourbe, disturb, 143/4123  
 Destrat, distracted, 80/2216  
 Destreine, to constrain, bind, 54/  
 1441  
 Diffinisse, to define, 88/2459,  
 165/4808  
 Digne, worthy, just, 43/1124,  
 149/4297  
 Digneliche, worthily, 53/1427  
 Dirke, dark, 83/2306  
 Dirke, Dirken, to make dark,  
 darken, 5/48, 49  
 Dirkenesse, darkness, 23/535  
 Disceyvable, deceptive, 4/23  
 Discordable, discordant, 143/4133  
 Discorde, to disagree, 94/2632,  
 102/2898  
 Discordyng, disagreeing, discord-  
 ant, 68/1849  
 Discours, judgment, reason, 165/  
 4804  
 Discressioun, discretion, 93/2594  
 Discussed, dispersed, scattered, 9/  
 149  
 Disdaignen, to disdain (*indig-*  
*nari*), 146/4213  
 Disencrese, to decrease, 173/5035  
 Disordinaunce, disorder, 150/4324  
 Dispenden, to spend, expend, 45/  
 1181  
 Dispone, to dispose, 135/3864  
 Disputisoun, disputation, 149/  
 4314  
 Disseveraunce, separation, 96/  
 2701  
 Dissimulen, to dissemble, 178/  
 5215  
 Distempre, intemperate, 121/3466  
 Distingwed, distinguished, 47/  
 1223  
 Dité, ditty, 134/3850  
 Divinour, diviner, 157/4541  
 Domesman, judge, 55/1467  
 Doom, judgment, 152/4395  
 Doumbe, dumb, 9/138  
 Doutous, Dowtos, doubtful, 5/37  
 Dowblennesse, duplicity, 182/63  
 Drede, dread, 21/497

- Dredeful, timid, 121/3468  
 Dredles, fearless, 106/3028  
 Dreint, Dreynt, drowned,  
     drenched, 4/22, 7/99, 148/4271  
 Dresse, to direct, order, 137/3954,  
     142/4104  
 Drouppe, to drop, 20/455  
 Drow, drew, 15/300  
 Duelly, duly, 22/530  
 Dulle, to become dull, 7/100  
 Dure, Duren, to last, 98/2755  
 Duske, to make dusk or dim, 5/  
     48  
 Dyverses (*pl.*), divers, 8/120  
 Dyvynynge, divination, 157/4541  
 Echid, increased, 77/2134  
 Echynnys, sea-urchins, 82/2266  
 Egalité, equality, evenness (of  
     mind), 42/1099  
 Egaly, equally, evenly, 43/1108,  
     157/4536  
 Egge, edge, 180/19  
 Egre, sharp, 25/610  
 Egren, to urge, excite, 141/4060  
 Eir, air, 45/1169  
 Ek, Eke, also, 40/1040, 181/36  
 Elde, old age, 5/48  
 Eldefadir, grandfather, 40/1042  
 Elder, older, 89/2493  
 Embelise, to embellish, 47/1223  
 Emperie, government, 51/1363  
 Emperisse, empress, 109/3098  
 Empoysenyng, poisoning, 11/206  
     (*venenum*).  
 Emprete, to imprint, 166/4839  
 Emprenten, obtain (translates the  
     Latin, *impetrent*), 159/4596. Per-  
     haps a mistake for *empetren*.  
 Emptid, exhausted, 5/34  
 Enbaissyng, a debasing, 109/3107  
 Enbrase, embrace, 142/4092  
 Enchaufen, to make hot, *chafe*,  
     73/2020  
 Encharge, to impose, 178/5214  
 Enchaunteresse, enchantress, 123/  
     3504  
 Endamagen, to damage, 15/316  
 Endirken, to obscure, 120/3418  
 Enditen, to indite, 4/4  
 Enfourme, to inform, instruct, 11/  
     212, 13/263  
 Enhaunse, Enhawnse, to raise,  
     exalt (*enhance*), 33/825  
 Enlace, to bind, entangle, enter-  
     twine, perplex, 13/245, 80/2207,  
     149/4298  
 Enoynte, to anoint, 36/923  
 Enpeyren, to impair, 120/3418,  
     139/4015  
 Ensampl, example, 9/151  
 Entalenten, to excite, 168/4876  
 Entecche, defile, pollute, 120/  
     3431  
 Entendyng, intent, looking sted-  
     fastly on, 8/126  
 Entente, to intend, 150/4345  
 Ententes, endeavours, labours, 7/  
     79  
 Ententif, attentive, intent, 12/  
     223, 29/731  
 Ententify, attentively, 103/2931  
 Enterchaunge, to interchange, 65/  
     1785, 131/3753  
 Entercomunynge, commerce, com-  
     munication, 57/1528  
 Entermedle, to intermix, 54/1436  
 Entré (*adytum*), 30/751  
 Entrechaunge, to interchange, 39/  
     1003  
 Entrelaced, intermingled, en-  
     tangled, 105/2981  
 Entremete, intermeddle, 104/  
     2964  
 Enveneme, to poison, infect, 120/  
     3437

- Enviroune, to surround, 34/848, 88/2437  
 Environynge, circumference, 164/4769  
 Erpeliche, Erpelyche, earthly, 52/1378, 69/1888  
 Erye, to plough, ear, 71/1964  
 Eschapen, to escape, 41/1054  
 Eschaufe, to become hot, to burn, 22/524  
 Eschewen, to avoid, escape, 177/5172  
 Eschuyng, eschewing, 99/2802  
 Establissee, to establish, 15/311  
 Eterne, eternal; fro eterne = from eternity, 153/4422  
 Eternité, eternity, 171/4986  
 Evenliche, evenly, 25/599  
 Everyche, every, 11/190; each, 181/48  
 Evesterre, evening star, 22/510  
 Excussyoun, execution, 184/65  
 Exceren, to exercise, practise, 52/1389  
 Exercitacioun, exercise, 140/4034  
 Exilynge, banishment, 11/205  
 Exite, to excite, 168/4881  
 Eyen, eyes, 183/36  
 Eyer, air, 170/4962  
  
 Fader, father, 18/414  
 Familiarité, familiarity, 30/740  
 Familers, familiars, 18/407  
 Fantesye, fancy, inclination, 181/51  
 Fasoun, fashion, 62/1693  
 Feffe, (?) 38/966  
 Fel, felle, fierce  
 Felewschipe, to accompany, 111/3141  
 Felefold, manifold, 30/738  
 Felliche, fiercely, 39/997  
 Felnesse, fierceness, 25/618  
 Felonous, wicked, depraved, 18/405  
 Felonye, crime, 124/3542  
 Fer, far, 23/554  
 Ferm, firm, 78/2148  
 Fermely, firmly, 157/4550  
 Ferne, fern, 64/1741  
 Ferne, distant, 60/1621  
 Ferpe, fourth, 56/1509  
 Festivaly, gaily, 59/1581  
 Festne, to fasten, fix, 10/166  
 Fette, fetched, 180/22  
 Fey, faith, truth, 112/3178  
 Ficchen, to fix, fasten, 45/1164, 88/2446  
 Fieblesse, feebleness, 81/2240, 112/3176  
 Fille, abundance, 48/1269  
 Flaumbe, flame, 98/2761  
 Fleme, to banish, 29/723  
 Fles, fleece, 180/18  
 Flete, Fleten, to float, flow, pass away, abound, 8/118, 28/690, 146/4223, 152/4376  
 Fletynge, flowing, 71/1961  
 Fley, flee, 149/4289  
 Fleyen, to flee, 125/3584  
 Flies, fleece, 50/1330  
 Flitte, to remove, 68/1853  
 Flittyng, changing, fickle, 78/2150  
 Flityng, fitting, 12/220  
 Flotere, to float, 99/2817  
 Floterynge, floating, 87/2420  
 Flouren, to flourish, 131/3763  
 Fodre, fodder, 148/4267  
 Foleyen, Folyen, to act foolishly, 67/1821, 1826  
 Folyly, foolishly, 12/220  
 Fooldest, foldest, 105/2984

- Forbrek, broke, interrupted, 108/3082  
 Fordoon, to undo, destroy, 62/1693  
 Fordryven, driven about, 12/215  
 Foreyne, foreign, 34/851  
 Forghe, furrow, 170/4959  
 Forheved, forehead, 16/346  
 Forknowyng, foreknowledge, 178/5187  
 Forleften, left (*pret.* of *forleve*, *linguo*), 9/150  
 Forlete, to cease, 96/2697; leave, forsake, 22/525  
 Forleten (*p.p.*), neglected, forsaken, 5/47  
 Forliven, degenerate from (*de-genero*), 78/2163  
 Forlorn, lost, 34/858, 121/3452  
 Forme, an error for *ferme*, to make firm, 23/547  
 Forpampred, overpampered, 180/5  
 Fors, force; 'no fors,' no matter, 182/13  
 Forsweryng, perjury, 23/536  
 Forpenke, to be sorry, grieved, 41/1058  
 Forpere, to further, promote, 41/1057  
 Forpest, farthest, 136/3918  
 Forpi, therefore, 28/689  
 Fortroden, trodden upon, trampled, 109/3100  
 Fortunel, fortuitous, 152/4379  
 Fortunouse, Fortuouse, fortuitous, 26/639, 38/983, 132/3779  
 Forwes, furrows, 180/12  
 Forwiter, foreknower, 178/5204  
 Foryetyn, forgotten, 101/2872  
 Foundement, foundation, 98/2754  
 Fowel, bird, 107/3053  
 Fram, from, 70/1931  
 Freele, frail, 61/1658  
 Frete, to eat, devour, 147/4252  
 Frounce, flounce, 9/147  
 Fructe, fruit, 180/3  
 Fruteflyng, fructifying, fruitful, 6/72  
 Fulfilling, satisfying, 79/2178  
 Fycche, fix, 108/3073. *See* Fiochen.  
 Fyn, end, 69/1892  
 Gabbe, 'gabbe I?' am I deceived? 49/1308  
 Galentyne, a dish in ancient cookery made of sopped bread and spices (*Halliwel*), 180/16  
 Galles, galls, 181/47  
 Gapen, to desire, be greedy for, 15/324, 36/910  
 Gapinge, desire, 36/910  
 Gastnesse, terror, fear, 75/2079  
 Geaunt, giant, 104/2966  
 Gentilesse, nobility, 78/2154  
 Geometrien, geometrician, 91/2552  
 Gerdoned, rewarded, 120/3410  
 Gerdoun, reward, 13/265  
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 Unhonestee, disreputableness, 24/587  
 Unhoped, unexpected, 139/4006  
 Université, whole, 165/4797  
 Unjoynen, Unjoygnen, to separate, 151/4373  
 Unknowyng, ignorant, 139/3997  
 Unknyttten, tounloose (*dissolvere*), 154/4459  
 Unkonnyng, Unkunnyng, unknowing, ignorant, 7/76, 11/202  
 Unkorven, uncut, 180/14  
 Unkoup, unknown, foreign, 34/870  
 Unlace, to disentangle, 105/2982  
 Unleveful, illicit, unlawful, 154/4456  
 Unmeke, fierce, cruel, 148/4267  
 Unmoeveable, immovable, 136/3901  
 Unmoeveableté, immobility, 136/3921  
 Unmyzty, weak, impotent, 13/241  
 Unneþ, scarcely, 27/652  
 Unparygal, unequal, 63/1708  
 Unpitouse, cruel, 4/24  
 Unpleyten, to explain, 61/1647  
 Unplite, explain, unfold, 167/4843  
 Unpunished, unpunished, 21/498  
 Unpurveyed, unforeseen, 30/743  
 Unraced, unbroken, whole, 110/3115  
 Unryztful, unjust, 10/185  
 Unryztfully, unrightfully, unjustly, 23/533  
 Unscience, unreal knowledge, no knowledge, 156/4515  
 Unsely, wretched, 39/1013  
 Unselynesse, wretchedness, 124/3544  
 Unskilfully, unwisely, improperly, 18/407  
 Unsolempne, not famous, not celebrated, 11/210  
 Unsowe, unsown, 180/10  
 Unspedful, unsuccessful, 178/5210  
 Unstauncheable, unlimited, infinite, 58/1573  
 Unstaunched, uncurbed, unrestrained, 54/1439  
 Unsuffrable, intolerable, 79/2179  
 Unusage, unfrequency, 57/1528

- Untretable, inexorable, implacable, 61/1641
- Unwar, unexpected, 35/886
- Unwarly, unaware, unexpectedly, 4/10
- Unwemmed, inviolate, 40/1023, 178/5201
- Unwened, unexpected, 139/4006
- Unwoot, knows not, 175/5099
- Unworshipful, dishonoured, 75/2054
- Uphepyng, heaping up, 37/951
- Upsodoun, upside down, 48/1274, 156/4501
- Upsprong, upsprung, 180/10
- Used, accustomed, wonted, 22/512
- Uterreste, extremest, outermost, 7/95
- Vanisse, to vanish, 74/2027
- Variaunt, varying, 22/518
- Vengerisse, a she-avenger, 107/3048
- Verray, Verrey, true, 19/429
- Vilfully (Wilsfully), wilfully, 116/3295
- Voide, having an empty purse (*vacuus*), 50/1316
- Voyded (of), emptied of, free from, 181/50
- Wakyng, watchful, 148/4263
- Walwe, to toss, 51/1361
- Walwyng, tossing, 29/712
- Wan, did win, 147/4240
- War, be aware, take care, 145/4200
- Warne, to refuse, deny, 37/950
- Wawe, a wave, 8/115
- Wayk, weak, 28/706
- Weep (*pret.*), wept, 35/883
- Welde, wild, 180/17. It may mean *boiled*, since another copy reads *wellyd*.
- Weleful, Welful, prosperous, joyful, 4/15
- Welefulnesse, Welfulnesse, prosperity, felicity, 11/188, 21/478
- Welken, to wither, fade, 146/4224
- Welkne, welkin, 184/62
- Welle, well, source, 157/4548
- Wende, weened, thought, 53/1397
- Wenge, wing, 170/4961
- Wenyng, opinion, 172/5022
- Wepen (*p.p.*), wept, 25/596
- Wepli, tearful, 5/29
- Werdes, fates, destinies, 4/10
- Werreye, to make war, 181/25
- Weten, to know, 156/4519
- Wex, wax, 167/4840
- Weyve, to waive, forsake, 29/722
- Wham, whom, 89/2482
- Whelwe, to toss, roll, 39/1001
- Whiderward, whither, 177/5171
- Whist, hushed, 51/1341
- Wierdes, fates, destinies, 12/231
- Wikke, wicked, bad, 64/1743
- Willynge, desire, 178/5203
- Wilne, to desire, 17/367
- Wilnyng, desire, 98/2781
- Wirche, to work, 12/235
- Wirchyng, working, operation, 95/2677
- Wist, known, 170/4937
- Witen, to know, learn, 88/2458, 132/3776, 160/4624
- Wipdraw, withdrew, 64/1751
- Wiphalden, to withhold, 142/4105
- Wipoute forþe, outwardly, 165/4803
- Wipseid, denied, 90/2501



- Wipstant, withstand, 29/715  
 Wipstonde (*p.p.*), withstood, 14/290  
 Witnesfully, attestedly, publicly, 131/3765  
 Witynge, knowledge, 156/4526  
 Wod, woad, 180/17  
 Wod, Wode, mad, raging, 12/225  
 Wode, wood, 39/995  
 Wodenesse, rage, madness, 45/1169, 107/3052  
 Wolen (*pl.*), will, 94/2645  
 Woltow, wilt thou, 97/2741  
 Wone, to dwell, 60/1627  
 Woode, Wode, furious, mad, 25/600  
 Woode, to rage, 123/3515  
 Woodnesse, rage, madness, 107/3052  
 Woot, knows, 43/1128  
 Wope, to weep, 36/905  
 Worchen, to work, 178/5215  
 Wost, knowest, 19/423  
 Woxe, to increase, wax, grow, 25/608  
 Woxen (*p.p.*), grown, 25/607  
 Wrekere, avenger, 128/3665  
 Wrekyng, vengeance, 147/4238  
 Wropely, grieved, sad, 7/87  
 Wrypen, twist, turn, wrest, 154/4452  
 Wymple, to cover with a veil or wimple, 31/774  
 Wyt, sense, 164/4771  
 Wyzt, wight, person, 19/425  
  
 Yave (*pl.*), gave, 180/4  
 Yben, been, 162/4698  
 Ybeyen, to obey, 105/2998  
 Ycaugt, caught, captured, 118/3371  
 Ycleped, called, 150/4346  
  
 Ydel, 'in ydel,' in vain, 5/43  
 Ydred, feared, 33/825  
 Yfelawshipped, associated, united, 53/1421  
 Yficched, fixed, 136/3910  
 Yfinissed, finished, 125/3558  
 Yflit, flitted, removed, 8/108  
 Ygeten, gotten, 65/1776  
 Yhardid, hardened, 133/3814  
 Yheuid, made heavy, 171/4974  
 Ylad, led, 37/956, 172/5022  
 Ylete, permitted, 130/3730  
 Ylett, hindered, 161/4674  
 Ylorn, lost, 147/4250  
 Ymaginable, possessing imagination, 166/4812  
 Ymaked, made, 87/2426  
 Ymedeled, mixed, 140/4029  
 Ynou3, enough, 71/1947  
 Yplitid, pleated, folded, 9/147  
 YPORVEYID, YPURVEID, foreseen, 155/4467, 4468  
 Ysen, seen, 72/1982  
 Yshad, shed, scattered, 68/1874  
 Yshet, shut, 170/4955  
 Ysmyte, smitten, 80/2202  
 Yspedd, made clear, determined, 161/4657; despatched, 149/4295  
 Yspendyd, examined (*expediero*), 161/4668  
 Ysprad, spread, 78/2140  
 Yspranid, sprinkled, mixed, 42/1102. *Read* yspraind.  
 Ystrenged, strengthened, 175/5098  
 Ypewed, behaved, 139/4008  
 Yprongen, pressed, squeezed, 57/1521  
 Ytravailed, laboured, 155/4469  
 Ytretid, handled, performed, 131/3765

Yvel, evil, 105/2976	ȝelden, to yield, 149/4303
Ywened, believed, 145/4178	ȝeve, to give, 149/4291
Ywist, known, 155/4475	ȝevyng, giving, 45/1188
Ywoven, woven, 6/51	ȝif, if, 9/131
Ywyst, known, 164/4759	ȝis, yes, 103/2919
Ȝeven, given, 141/4069	ȝisterday, yesterday, 171/4994
	ȝitte, yet, 156/4508
ȝaf, gave, 8/130	ȝok, ȝokke, yoke, 32/802, 60/1620
ȝeelde, ȝelde, seldom, 39/1002, 52/1372	ȝolde ( <i>p.p.</i> ), yielded, 25/599
ȝeld, yielded, 147/4253	ȝonge, young, 35/889
	ȝoupe, youth, 10/168

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